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CONFIDENTIAL.

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PART VIII.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF ARABIA.

July to September 1906.

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CONFIDENTIAL.**Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Arabia.****PART VIII.**

[22152]

No. 1.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 428.)

Sir,

Therapia, June 24, 1906.

SINISTER rumours of the decomposition of the Turkish forces in the Yemen have, for some time, been fairly current here, but it would be difficult to obtain reliable information in the absence of Mr. Richardson, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeidah, who has however, I am glad to say, recently returned to his post and been requested to keep me as fully informed as possible on the course of events in those parts.

I have heard, however, that the Turkish forces operating in the Yemen succeeded some months ago in winning over to their side the powerful Arab Sheikh Kassim and his followers and, for a time, utilized them against the Imam Yahia.

In return for these services rendered to the Turks, Sheikh Kassim tried to induce the Ottoman Government to recognize his claims and pretensions to replace the Imam, but finding that Ahmed Feizi Pasha, the Turkish Commander-in-chief, was merely using him as a cat's-paw, he began to enter into negotiations with the Imam and to side with the latter against the Turks. The result was a stage of guerilla warfare even more acute than that which had already harassed the Turkish troops.

It appears, though it is difficult to ascertain details, that bodies of these latter troops, being unable to obtain redress of their complaints as to pay, bad commissariat, &c., broke out into revolt of so serious a nature that Ahmed Feizi Pasha was obliged to employ artillery to quell it. A Commission has, I learn, been appointed to investigate and deal with the incident, the members of the Commission being Ferid Pasha, Chief of Ahmed Feizi's Staff, Naji Pasha of the War Office, Colonel Riza Bey, Aide-de-camp to His Imperial Majesty, and Colonel Sami Bey of the General Staff.

It is also rumoured that, despite the reluctance shown last year by the Syrian troops to fight against their Arab coreligionists in the Yemen, the Ottoman Government are contemplating the dispatch of further drafts from the Fifth Army Corps at Damascus to reinforce the Imperial troops in the Yemen.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

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No. 2.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 347.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 2, 1906.

THE French Ambassador informed me on the 22nd ultimo that the French Consul at Muscat had given His Majesty's Consul, last April, a draft proposal for giving effect to the Arbitration Award of the 8th August, 1905, and that Major Grey had

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announced his intention of submitting it for His Majesty's Government's approval without delay. As His Majesty's Consul had decided not to submit any counter-proposals and had forwarded to His Majesty's Government the draft received from his French colleague, the latter was justified in thinking that his proposals had received Major Grey's approval.

M. Laronce had up to the present received no reply, and he had ascertained that Major Grey had given up his intention of forwarding the draft to London, and had sent it to the Government of India. This no doubt accounted for the delay.

M. Cambon, in calling my attention to his previous representations on this question, requested me to take all possible steps to arrive at an early solution of a matter which was of no very great importance and which, in view of the good relations existing between our two countries and of the conciliatory attitude of the French Government, could be settled without difficulty by simply accepting the proposals formulated by the French Consul at Muscat and accepted by His Majesty's Consul.

I informed M. Cambon that he is under a misapprehension in thinking that His Majesty's Consul at Muscat was in agreement with the proposals advanced by his French colleague. Major Grey, on the contrary, disagreed so completely with M. Laronce that he considered it useless to formulate counter-proposals, and had referred the matter to His Majesty's Government.

M. Laronce's proposals were, I added, now under consideration of His Majesty's Government, and a communication would shortly be addressed to his Excellency on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

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No. 3.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 4.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, a paraphrase of telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 2nd instant, regarding Beda affairs.

India Office, July 3, 1906.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

AFFAIRS in Aden Hinterland.

Beda Treaty.

Telegram has been received from Resident, dated the 30th June, stating that he understands instructions in your telegram of the 13th June.

See latter part of your telegram of the 19th ultimo.

July 2, 1906.

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No. 4.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 5.)

Sir,

India Office, July 4, 1906.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo, forwarding, for his observations, a copy of Sir E. Grey's despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, No. 250, of the 21st ultimo, relative to a report made to the Turkish Government by their Military Commandant at Medjid with regard to certain proceedings of the British Political Agent at Bahrein.

In reply, I am to say that Captain Prideaux' report upon the case, with the orders of the Government of India thereupon, was transmitted to you with my letter of the 6th ultimo; and Sir E. Grey will observe that the Government of India were of

opinion that, inasmuch as neither Bahrein nor British interests were involved, Captain Prideaux' action was not altogether well advised.

At the same time, I am to point that His Majesty's Government have never recognized Turkish sovereignty on the Arabian coast below Ojair.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

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No. 5.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 7.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 5th instant, regarding Muscat Arbitration.

India Office, July 7, 1906.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, July 5, 1906.

MUSCAT. Your telegrams dated the 21st May and 3rd instant. Early settlement of questions rising from the arbitration is being pressed for by French Government. It is urged by Foreign Office that, as regards future, death of present flag-holders will bring whole question to an automatic end in comparatively short time, while constant present friction may be caused by negotiations being prolonged. They are therefore disposed (though they concur in principle in criticisms on M. Laronce's proposals contained in Grey's Nos. 168 and 200) to accept French list without further demur, as an act of friendship, and to concede that, provided in no case number of dhows now to be authorized shall be exceeded, transference may be permitted to one other dhow belonging to the same owner of flag of any dhow on the list which has been destroyed, sold, lost, or otherwise disposed of. These concessions it is proposed to embody in a Memorandum to be presented to French Ambassador. As regards jurisdiction, His Majesty's Government would adhere to view expressed in my telegram of the 21st February, and would adopt suggestion made by Grey on Article VI of draft put forward by M. Laronce.

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No. 6.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 445.)

Sir,

Constantinople, July 1, 1906.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 428 of the 24th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Embassy reporting on political and military affairs in the Yemen.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

* See Sir P. Currie's note to Porte, dated August 12, 1895; also Lord Salisbury's note to Turkish Ambassador, dated December 1896, and Sir N. O'Connor's telegram No. 51, dated March 19, 1903.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Colonel Surtees to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 36.)

Sir,

Constantinople, July 1, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to request that you will be so good as to forward, for the information of the military authorities, the following résumé of the actual military and political condition of affairs in the Yemen:—

At the death of the Imam, Mohammed-el-Din, of the family of the Zeiditi, in 1904, two candidates for the Imamship appeared on the scene, viz., Yahya Hamid-el-Din, the son of the above-mentioned Imam, and Saïd Mohammed-el-Haschim-el-Dajani, the latter being a man of some 60 years of age, capable, educated, and Chief of the tribe of Dajan, which is located in the Sa'ada country.

The chief tribes of the Yemen, however, chose as Imam Yahya, who on the death of his father assumed the additional name of Hamid-el-Din (but is known by the Turks as Mohammed Yahya), and marched against Saïd Mohammed-el-Haschim-el-Dajani, conquered him, and compelled him to relinquish his claim to collect taxes from neighbouring tribes.

When Marshal Feizi Pasha in last September retook Sana'a, Mohammed-el-Dajani rebelled against the Imam, hoping that the Turks would reward him by nominating him Imam of the Yemen.

Several fights took place between the partisans of the Imam and of Mohammed-el-Dajani, finally resulting in the advantage of the latter. These hostilities were frequently interrupted by intrigues conducted by both parties against the Turks, and also by intrigues between the Turks and El Dajani against the Imam.

It seems that Yahya wrote a long letter to El Dajani exhorting him to come to terms and to operate jointly with him against the Turk, their natural enemy; but the Imam of Sa'ada (El Dajani) rejected the offer, refusing to admit a rival in the Imamship, arguing that it was not hereditary, but should be held by a member of the Zeiditi who was over 40 years of age (a condition unfulfilled by Yahya), and that the Imam should not only be the most learned in the doctrines of Islam, but also the most valiant in war. Moreover, El Dajani challenged his rival to a theological dispute, undertaking to recognize Yahya's authority should it be decided that the latter had vanquished him.

Yahya did not accept these proposals. El Dajani then developed a conciliatory attitude towards the Turkish Government, and applied for a small pecuniary subsidy and some munitions of war, promising if such were granted to fight against Yahya. This offer was submitted to Constantinople for the decision of the Sultan, by whom it was not unfavourably received, since a *modus vivendi* with Yahya appeared impossible, not only because of his unconciliatory demeanour, but because of the unbending attitude of the Zeiditis, who do not recognize in the Sultan the Commander of the Faithful, alleging that this title is vested in the Zeid Arabs, who are descended from the Prophet, whereas the Sultan is a Turk and not an Arab. On the other hand, to arrive at an arrangement with El Dajani did not appear to present insuperable difficulties, since the latter did not aspire as Yahya did to the Caliphate.

It seems that the Sultan's reply—characteristic of the usual yielding diplomacy, which trusts no one—was received about a month since by the Yemen authorities, and was to the effect that the pecuniary subsidy could be granted if the Yemen authorities considered it advisable, but that the request for arms could not be acceded to, as, if El Dajani should be victorious against Yahya, there was no guarantee that he would not appear at the head of the Zeiditi in arms against the Imperial troops.

Meanwhile, the whole country continues to be in a state of anarchy. The highland Arabs are at present occupied in agricultural pursuits (the harvest is reported to be abundant) and are tranquil, but the struggle will shortly recommence.

The military situation shows no sign of improvement. Feizi Pasha is still at Sana'a, but with the scant forces available is unable to undertake any expedition, whilst discipline deteriorates and mutinous acts are prevalent.

About the middle of last month some Redif companies of the garrison of Imran left their post and marched to Sana'a, where they clamorously urged their claim to be discharged as some of their comrades at Sana'a had been.

Feizi Pasha caused these men to be paraded and addressed them, requiring them to return to their duty, but many refused to listen to him, and spread themselves over the city. Shortly after this the Pasha received information that the mutineers intended

to force one of the town gates of Sana'a by night and to march out thence to Hodeida, where they hoped to obtain possession of a ship and set sail from the Yemen.

The Marshal thereupon concentrated some reliable troops with artillery near the gate, and when the column of mutineers approached, opened fire. Many were killed, the remainder being made prisoners, and eventually distributed amongst the loyal battalions; only a very few contrived to escape, and these have probably joined Yahya.

It would seem that the Porte has decided to gradually withdraw from the Yemen all the remaining Redif battalions, and to send only recruits as reinforcements; 17,000 are required.

Information received from Smyrna states that these are to be supplied from this year's levy, from which only the most robust are chosen, and a proportion of two-thirds of those presenting themselves at Smyrna are destined for the Yemen.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. CONYERS SURTEES, Colonel,
Military Attaché.

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No. 7.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 449.)

Sir,

Constantinople, July 3, 1906.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 400, Confidential, of the 11th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Jeddah, respecting the state of affairs in the Nejd and Bin Saood.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Acting Consul Mohammed Hussein to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 34.)

Sir,

Jeddah, June 19, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to report that news has come here that Bin Saood has lately given orders to all the Arab Sheikhs and tribes in Nejd to desist from keeping communication with the Turkish officials and troops, and to stop carrying their mails and supplies, under a threat of severe punishment if his orders were not complied with.

The Sheikhs of tribes who were till now helping the Turks in Nejd have informed the military officers who are with the Turkish troops there that they will have nothing to do with them in future, and that they will not carry their mails and supplies.

This information was sent by the officer in command of the Turkish troops in Nejd to Medina, and was telegraphed to Constantinople, wherefrom order has been given to the Military Mutessarif, who is still in Medina, to march with 600 troops and two guns to the help of the Turkish troops now in Nejd, and take the necessary steps to keep the lines of communication open.

It is also reported that the son of Bin Rashid has also gone out to attack Bin Saood, and has asked the Turkish troops to co-operate with him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MOHAMMED HUSSEIN.

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No. 8.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 10.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of (1) Secret

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letter to the Government of India dated the 24th November, 1905; and (2) Secret despatch from the Government of India dated the 31st May, 1906, regarding Bahrein affairs.

India Office, July 9, 1906.

Inclosure 1 in No. 8.

Mr. Brodrick to Government of India.

(Secret.)

My Lord,

India Office, November 24, 1905.

I FORWARD herewith, for the information of your Excellency's Government, a Memorial I have received from the Sheikh of Bahrein, together with a copy of correspondence with the firm of Kynoch (Limited), by whom the Memorial has been transmitted to me.

2. It is stated in the Memorial that a copy has been addressed to your Excellency. I request that I may be informed in due course of any action that may be taken in the matter, and that I may be favoured with any observations you may have to offer in connection with the fact that the Sheikh has employed the agent of a commercial firm for the purposes of a political communication.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ST. JOHN BRODRICK.

Inclosure 2 in No. 8.

Messrs. Kynoch to India Office.

Sir,

Lion Works, Witton, Birmingham, November 14, 1905.

WE have the honour to submit for your consideration a Petition, in the original and translated, from the reigning Prince at Bahrein, which we have received from our agents for transmission to you.

The Prince is a friend of the English, and supports us in preference to foreign competitors, and in these days we have great difficulties in counteracting the influence of foreign diplomacy on commercial matters, but we know nothing personally of the matters the Prince refers to. We could, however, obtain from our agents any further information you may desire.

We have, &c.

(For Messrs. Kynoch, Limited),

(Signed)

FRANK HUXHAM,

Secretary and Manager.

Inclosure 3 in No. 8.

Petition from the Sheikh of Bahrein.

(Translation from the Arabic.)

I LAY open my complaint hereby to the gracious British Imperial Government's compassion.

About six years ago I was in perfect quietness, pleased with your Representatives' usages, disposing myself of the things of the Principality without any interference, and all the natives were pleased with me and my treating them.

Merely between your State (whose power God save!) and me there were two Agreements, dated the 19th Muharram, 1298 (corresponding to the 22nd December, 1880), and the 14th Shaban, 1309 (corresponding to the 13th March, 1892), by which I had bound myself not to enter into negotiations nor make Treaties of any sort with any

State or Government other than the British without the consent of the said British Government, and to refuse permission to any other Government than the British to establish Diplomatic or Consular Agencies or coaling depôts in my territory, unless with the consent of the British Government.

But, as to the home matters, I was a Ruler as the Bahrein Rulers my predecessors without difference, except that the British Government had here a Representative under whose jurisdiction your subjects were laid. But that Agent was a Mussulman, knowing the exigencies of the religion of the Principality people and all the Mussulmans, between whom and him the relations were extremely easy.

But these six years ago my tranquillity changed in trouble, and I became grieved with the vexations of your Representatives, and their lowering my situation without motive from me.

1. At first, your Representatives obliged me to interdict the sale of arms, and I became deprived of this advantage, I only among the Arabs' Chiefs; for it is a free trade elsewhere on all the Arabian coast.

2. Later the Mussulman Representative here was replaced for an English one, who meddled himself with the home matters, and arrogated to himself the competency in what was no business of his, though he was ignorant of the religious law and customs of the Mussulmans. Here is an example of what resulted of that:—

A German merchant evinced contempt for one of my family's Princes, the Sheikh Ali, a son of my late brother Ahmad, and in some way one of my sons, married with my daughter. Then three men-of-war went in front of the Principality capital, for the sake of that German merchant, and stayed there many days, threatening and preparing for battle with us.

3. Afterwards your Representatives asked me for delivering my son, the Sheikh Hamad, to them, and I, for my respect to Britain, delivered him to them; then they arrested him and kept him prisoner on board of one of the vessels.

4. They seized upon the house of mine at which I had authorized the Sheikh Ali to live in; they possessed themselves of all his personal properties, horses, thoroughbred camels, household goods, utensils, &c.; they carried all that to Bushire, Koweit, and Muscat, except a part which burned.

5. As Sheikh Ali had fled for fear, your Representatives requested me to proclaim order to arrest him, and I did so, not willingly but by force.

6. On account of the quarrel which had happened between the German and the Ali's servants, your Representatives ordered and gathered a fine, and I must have got scourged violently the Sheikh Ali's servants in presence of the Political Resident of the Persian Gulf and the Political Resident at Bahrein. Accordingly that affair was a settled one, when, at my amazement, happened the event aforesaid.

7. When Sheikh Ali surrendered, asking for indulgence from the gracious Imperial Government, he was arrested and is yet a prisoner.

8. They threw down my flag-mast, the sign of my rank.

9. After all that I wrote to your Representatives that they state to the gracious Government the vexations I had suffered; but no reply reached me from them.

Accordingly I try to move your pity, and I request from your justice and equity that you restore me in my previous quietness and contentment; for it is the state that suits you as well as us, and thereby your reputation will be retrieved among the people of these countries.

I wrote this in two copies, one of which I send to the Viceroy of India, his Excellency Lord Minto, and the other to the Secretary of State for India, his Excellency Mr. Brodrick.

All of us pray God in behalf of Great Britain for ever. God save you!

The 3rd Shaban, 1323 (2nd October, 1905).

(Signed and sealed from Issa-bin-Ali-al-Khalifa, the Ruler of Bahrein.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 8.

India Office to Messrs. Kynoch.

Sir,

India Office, November 22, 1905.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Brodrick to acknowledge, with an expression of his thanks, the receipt of your letter of the 14th November, forwarding the original and translation of a Memorial from the Sheikh of Bahrein, received by your firm through their agents.

Communications between the Sheikh and the British Government are conducted by the Government of India, and I am to state that the Memorial will be transmitted to the Governor-General for the necessary action.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 5 in No. 8.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Simla, May 31, 1906.

WE have the honour to refer to Mr. Brodrick's Secret despatch dated the 24th November, 1905, regarding the Memorial from the Sheikh of Bahrein.

2. In compliance with the request made in paragraph 2 of the despatch, we inclose herewith a copy of our correspondence with the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf on the subject of the Memorial.

3. With regard to the action of the Sheikh in having employed the agent of a commercial firm for the purpose of a political communication, we would invite your attention to the reply* given by Sheikh Esa to a question put to him on the subject by Major Cox at a personal interview. The point is dealt with in the last paragraph of the reply which we have authorized the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to forward to the Chief.

4. You will see from Major Cox's letters dated the 2nd and 22nd February, 1906, that Sheikh Esa has never had any direct dealings with Messrs. Kynoch, and does not know their name, but that the firm has recently supplied a large consignment of cartridges to M. Goguyer, the French merchant at Bahrein. Major Cox infers from this fact, and from the circumstantial evidence referred to in his letter dated the 21st January, 1906, that M. Goguyer had a hand in the preparation of the Memorial.

We have, &c.
(Signed)

MINTO.
KITCHENER.
A. T. ARUNDEL.
DENZIL IBBETSON.
H. ERLE RICHARDS.
E. N. BAKER.
C. H. SCOTT.
C. L. TUPPER.

Inclosure 6 in No. 8.

*Government of India to Major Cox.**Fort William, December 6, 1905.*

I AM directed to forward, in original, a Petition from Sheikh Esa, Chief of Bahrein, dated the 2nd October, 1905, together with an English translation of the same received with it, and to request that you will report if you have any observation to make on any of the matters referred to therein, or any suggestions as to the tenour of the reply which should be made.

* See Inclosure 15.

2. It will be convenient if you will express your opinion as to the authorship of the document, which does not read as if it were the work of Sheikh Esa alone. You will no doubt observe that the statement about the knocking down of the flagstaff is repeated, though Sheikh Esa informed Captain Prideaux that he withdrew this.

Inclosure 7 in No. 8.

*Government of India to Major Cox.**Fort William, December 19, 1905.*

IN continuation of the letter from the Government of India in the Foreign Department dated the 6th December, 1905, I am directed to forward a copy of a Secret despatch, dated the 24th November, 1905, from His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, together with its inclosures, on the subject of the Memorial from the Sheikh of Bahrein.

2. I am to request the return of the original Arabic Memorial sent herewith, together with your remarks in connection with the fact that the Sheikh has employed the agent of a commercial firm for transmitting his Memorial to the Secretary of State.

Inclosure 8 in No. 8.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, January 21, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to reply to Foreign Department letter dated the 6th December, 1905, on the subject of the Memorial addressed to Government by the Sheikh of Bahrein.

2. I asked the Political Agent, Bahrein, for his views, in the first instance, and attach a copy of his reply. It will be seen that he is of opinion that Sheikh Esa's associate in the dispatch of the Memorial was Sheikh Mahomed Abdul Wahab Pasha, the Turkish subject, who has recently been reported upon in Muscat Diaries, and with whose identity the Government of India are familiar.

It is quite possible that the Arab, who is a close friend of Goguyer, may have had something to do with it, but I think circumstantial evidence points rather to M. Goguyer himself or his son. They were both at Bahrein with a party of French pearl merchants in August, September, or October 1905,* and it will be noted that the handwriting in which the English translation which accompanied Sheikh Esa's Petition is written is a continental one, and that the notepaper used is the ordinary cross-ruled pattern used by foreign merchants, and which to my knowledge was used by Goguyer in Muscat. The handwriting is not Goguyer's own, and probably not his son's, but very possibly that of Madame Nattan or one of her party. I am endeavouring to obtain specimens of their handwriting, and if any tangible result is arrived at I will submit a further report later.

The prominent position given to Sheikh Esa's grievance regarding the arms traffic also points to Goguyer; and, on the other hand, the inclusion of the English date and the correct names of Lord Minto and Mr. Brodrick, and lastly the idea which prompted the despatch of the Memorial through Messrs. Kynoch all suggest a European rather than an Arab coadjutor.

3. At the conclusion of their communication under reply, the Government of India invite my remarks upon the fact that Sheikh Esa employed the agent of a commercial firm for the transmission of his Memorial to the Secretary of State. For so venerable a patriarch Sheikh Esa is very ignorant in such matters, and I think that any remarks addressed to him from the point of view that his action was a breach of etiquette would be lost upon him. Owing, however, to the fact that he has had very little to do with British officers up till quite recently and, in spite of assurances from Captain Prideaux and myself, affects to be uncertain whether all his wishes or representations are communicated to Government, it might be well if I were permitted to make a communication to him on behalf of Government to the effect that, while the British Government are

* Bushire Residency Diaries for the weeks ending September 17, October 8 and 29, 1905.
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always glad to receive and ready to lend a just and sympathetic ear to the legitimate representations of their subjects and dependents, so far as he is concerned they have trusted local Representatives whose responsibility and habit it is to communicate his circumstances and wishes to them fully, and that in view of this fact they can only consider his communications when received through those responsible officers and not through the commercial channels to which he has needlessly resorted in the present instance.

4. The arms trade to Bahrein, which is brought into prominence in this correspondence, is only one factor of the general question of the arms trade from Muscat to other parts of the littoral, and if, as seems probable, the whole question is now under review by the Government of India, the case of Bahrein will no doubt be considered simultaneously with that of Koweit, with regard to which I had the honour to address Government very recently under my Office indorsement of the 31st December, 1905.

With regard to the other topics touched upon in Sheikh Esa's letter, Captain Prideaux's comment thereon and the general position at Bahrein, I ask permission to postpone any special remarks or recommendations for a short time. I hope to pay a leisurely visit to Bahrein at an early date to discuss various matters with the Political Agent and the Sheikh, and I shall be in a better position then to address Government fully.

I return the original Arabic Memorial as directed. The original English translation I take the liberty of keeping for the present.

Inclosure 9 in No. 8.

Captain Prideaux to Major Cox.

Bahrein, January 13, 1906.

WITH reference to your Office indorsement dated the 26th December, 1905, inclosures to which are herewith returned, on the subject of Sheikh Esa-bin-Ali's Petition, dated the 2nd October, 1905, I have the honour to submit the following report:—

2. The secret of the despatch of this Petition has been extremely well kept in Bahrein, and I doubt if any of the Chief's subjects, except one or two of his relations and his clerk, have had any cognizance of it. The English translation was undoubtedly made in Bombay, and I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that Sheikh Mahomed-bin-Abdul Wahab Pasha must have been the Chief's correspondent and agent in the matter there.

3. I have asked the Chief why he had not forwarded the Petition through me, and have pointed out that he would probably have received his answer quicker if he had done so. He replied that he had informed me in his letter of the 30th May, 1905, that he would address the Government direct if he did not receive through me an early reply to all his representations, and he had subsequently only carried out this threat.

4. To some extent the Chief's statement may be considered plausible, as, with the exceptions of the long message which you desired me in your letter dated the 11th June, 1905, to communicate to him, and of my letter dated the 4th July, 1905, to which I have referred in the first paragraph of my letter dated the 16th July, 1905, to your address, Sheikh Esa has not been given any definite reply. He has never, however, reminded me of this, nor has he inquired whether Government had in any way modified the message which you had sent to him. Moreover, after acquiescing in the deportation of Sheikh Ali, it seems curious that the Chief should affect to think that we had not been acting entirely under instructions from Government.

5. In the matter of the flagstaff I have pressed the Chief to say whether he now believes that it was lowered under my orders, that it was lowered by my subordinates without my knowledge, or that it was blown down by the wind. He has replied that perhaps the flagstaff was not lowered under my orders, but that he has heard from reliable persons that the sepoys who were in charge of the house had intentionally pulled it down. I need hardly say that this accusation is ridiculous. You may perhaps, however, deem it advisable to call upon the Chief to produce his informants before you when you next visit Bahrein.

6. It is characteristic of Sheikh Esa that when referring to the two Agreements of 1880 and 1892 he should make no reference to the numerous occasions on which we have resolutely given him aid and protection, his obtuseness of feeling in this connection having even caused him to omit mention of the important Treaty of 1861 in which the first guarantee of British protection for his State was openly made.

7. Still more astonishing will the Government probably consider the fact of the Chief's objecting to the presence of a British officer in Bahrein. With a community of some eight or ten Europeans in the place, a considerable influx of native Christians from Turkey, and the large increase of trade enjoyed by the merchants of Bahrein, many of whom are British subjects, it is not probable that the Government will be impressed by the Chief's preference for the former system, under which a native merchant gave only a portion of his time to their interests.

8. With regard to the Arms Traffic Prohibition, I can only venture to make the following observations with the greatest diffidence, as the Agreement on the subject was taken from the Chief before the formation of the Bahrein Political Agency, and I have not been able to refer to any correspondence on the subject:—

I was First Assistant to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf at the time, however, and, if my memory serves me, the Chief was first asked by Colonel Meade to subscribe to an Agreement similar to that which the Sultan of Muscat had just granted. The Government of India, however, considered that such an Agreement would not suit the different conditions of Bahrein, and the Sheikh was accordingly desired in language that I fear he must have resented as too peremptory to agree to absolutely prohibit the import and export of arms and ammunition in his dominion.

9. At the same time, I have never heard either from the Chief himself or from any other person that Sheikh Esa was nursing a grievance in this connection. Moreover, more than one shop for the sale of arms is well known to exist in Muharraq, nominally to facilitate the sale of weapons imported previous to the issue of the Prohibition, and I have heard that Sheikh Hamad, whose importations of goods are never scrutinized by the customs farmers, is suspected of being engaged to a considerable extent in the illicit trade. I have been quietly watching this subject for some time past, but have taken no action whatever, except to advise Sheikh Esa to remind M. Goguyer, on the latter's first arrival here, of the existence of the Prohibition.

10. I do not suppose that the Government will consider for a moment the possibility of cancelling or modifying the Agreement in force, as the people of Bahrein in general have no personal need for more arms, and the Chief can always obtain the consent of Government to import whatever may be required in special cases. To endeavour to place the other Chiefs on the Arab side of the Gulf on the same footing, if it has not already been done, would appear to be a far more satisfactory alternative.

11. The question whether, and to what extent, the Chief of Bahrein has suffered pecuniary loss from the total suppression of the arms trade can probably be calculated in your Office without much difficulty, but to say what proportions of the arms imported into Bahrein would ultimately have found their way into Persia, Turkey, and independent Arabia respectively is a much less easy matter.

My late Munshi, Khan Sahib Haji Abbas, is of opinion that 50 per cent. went to Persia, 30 to Turkish territory, 10 to Oman, and 10 remained in the islands.

12. I should personally not be surprised to learn that the customs revenue which the Chief now receives is greater than that which he obtained in 1897, including the duty on arms, this fact being largely due to the opening of the two European firms in Bahrein, who were no doubt partially attracted to Manama by the presence of a British Political Officer and the more frequent calls of steamers in that port. In conclusion, I venture to express the opinion that, until the Chief exhibits a less obstinate attitude and a greater sense of the benefits he has received, it is not advisable to make him any concessions whatever.

Inclosure 10 in No. 8.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, February 2, 1906.

IN reply to Foreign Department letter dated the 19th December, 1905, I have the honour to submit a report from the Political Agent, Bahrein, regarding the Memorial forwarded by some one on behalf of Sheikh Esa to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

2. On the 21st ultimo I had the honour to forward the views of Captain Prideaux and myself upon the duplicate Petition addressed by Sheikh Esa to his Excellency the Viceroy, and we have little further to add.

Since last writing I have obtained specimens of the handwriting of Goguyer's son Jean and of Mme. Nattan, but cannot identify either with the writing found in the

translation referred to in the first paragraph of Foreign Department letter of the 6th December, 1905. There remain Goguyer's younger son and Mme. Nattan's daughter, who might have written it, but I see no likelihood of being able to obtain specimens of their handwriting for the present, and therefore have the honour to return the translation in question, together with the Arabic original of the Petition to His Majesty's Secretary of State, received with Foreign Department letter dated the 19th December, 1905, in case the Government of India should think it desirable to institute inquiries through the police authorities in Bombay.

As regards the Muscat trade, Messrs. Kynoch's chief constituents are the British Indian traders, Damodar Dharamsee, Dhanjee Purshotum Dhanjee, and a Parsee named Lodawalla, and also Messrs. A. and T. J. Malcolm, of Bushire. I should not connect any of them with Sheikh Esa's Petition.

Inclosure 11 in No. 8.

Captain Prideaux to Major Cox.

Bahrein, January 27, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Office indorsement dated the 3rd January, 1906, forwarding a copy of Foreign Department letter dated the 19th December, 1905, and inclosures, including an Arabic Memorial in original submitted by the Chief of Bahrein to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

2. As the Memorial in question is a duplicate of the one which I have previously seen and reported on in my letter dated the 13th January, 1906, to your address, I have little more to say on the subject. From what I have gathered in intercourse with Sheikh Esa, the latter has never had any direct dealings with Messrs. Kynoch, nor does he know their name. I think it would be useful if the Commissioner of Police in Bombay were asked to inform us who are the firm's customary correspondents or agents in that city.

3. The Memorial (in original) is returned herewith.

Inclosure 12 in No. 8.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, February 22, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to refer to paragraph 2 of my letter, marginally noted,* on the subject of the submission by the Sheikh of Bahrein of a Memorial through Messrs. Kynoch (Limited), of Birmingham.

2. I note from the "Return of Arms and Ammunition" shipped by steam-ship "Baluchistan" from England during January last (of which document the Government of India have received a copy from the Foreign Office), that a large consignment of cartridges has been supplied by the firm in question to M. Goguyer.

The fact that the Frenchman is in direct business relations with Messrs. Kynoch makes it the more probable that he was a party to Sheikh Esa's Memorial.

Inclosure 13 in No. 8.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, February 25, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to advert to the correspondence on the subject of Sheikh Esa's Memorial ending with Foreign Department telegram dated the 22nd February, 1906.

2. I am submitting simultaneously, under this Office letter of the 25th February,

* See Inclosure 8.

1906, a summary of what passed at a recent interview between myself and the Sheikh, and would ask that it may be generally regarded as the fuller report contemplated in paragraph 4 of my letter of the 21st January, 1906, but would add here a few words of final comment on the Memorial in question.

3. Of the nine items of complaint represented, or in some cases misrepresented, in the document:—

Item 1. Regarding the Arms Prohibition, is now preferred for the first time, and has been discussed with the Sheikh at my recent interview, to the summary of which I would invite reference.

Item 8. The alleged demolition of the Sheikh's flagstaff is an entire misunderstanding on the part of the Sheikh and has been repeatedly explained to him; and it will be seen that, subject to the concurrence of Government and his amenability, I have expressed my readiness to adjust the matter to his satisfaction.

Items 2 to 7 of protest or complaint are all features of proceedings taken by us in regard to Bahrein which have passed into history, and seem to call for no comment from me or reply to Sheikh Esa.

As regards item 9, the non-receipt of replies to his representations, Sheikh Esa's letter of the 30th May, 1905, to the Political Agent, Bahrein, and now referred to in the latter's letter of the 13th January last, was fully replied to, as far as I was in a position to do so, in my long letter addressed to the Sheikh in Memorandum form on the 7th June, which was carefully communicated to him by the Political Agent at a personal interview arranged for the purpose.

In this connection it would seem that the only form of communication which in Sheikh Esa's view would constitute that suitable and adequate response to his requests which has hitherto been denied him would be one in which the Government of India intimated to him that they were sorry for the action which they had taken at Bahrein last year; that they saw that the presence of a British officer was not necessary and would remove him; and that in future, as long as the Sheikhs of Bahrein did not actively oppress British subjects, they would be left to carry on the administration or mal-administration of Manama as best pleased them. If it is not this, it is not easy to see what special reply it is that the Sheikh wants.

4. I may remark in conclusion that Sheikh Esa's reference to the Customs question in his letter of the 30th May above referred to could hardly have been meant, or properly be taken, as serious. It was simply a suggestion that Government should, without any *quid pro quo* or compensating advantage whatever, pay off all his debts to the "banians" and let him conduct the Customs through the medium of Bahrein Arab and Seedi retainers selected by himself. I did not describe the proposal so baldly in replying to Sheikh Esa, as I was glad even of this opening, as emanating from Sheikh Esa himself, for the discussion of the Customs question.

It will be seen, however, from the report of my interview with him on the 14th instant that he has no intention of adopting our advice in any serious or reasonable way whatever.

Inclosure 14 in No. 8.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, February 25, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to refer to the Secretary of State's Secret despatch dated the 10th November, 1905, on the subject of our policy at Bahrein, forwarded to me under Foreign Department indorsement of the 30th idem.

2. In that despatch His Majesty's Government, while not deeming it convenient at present to define in precise terms the position of the Sheikh of Bahrein towards the Protecting Power, went on to authorize the Government of India to instruct the political authorities in the Persian Gulf to proceed as proposed in paragraph 6 of the draft which formed Appendix (A) of Secret letter dated the 14th September, 1905, from the Government of India to the Secretary of State.

In the paragraph referred to the Government of India pronounced the view that the one question on which they felt compelled to offer authoritative advice was that of Customs reform, and suggested that the best course in the first instance might be for me to have a frank explanation with the Chief on the subject.

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That explanation I have now had, and it will be seen from the accompanying Memorandum of what passed at a long interview between myself, the Political Agent, Bahrein, and Sheikh Esa, on the 14th instant, that the latter has once more refused altogether to accept the advice of the Government of India in this respect in any form whatever.

3. For speaking plainly to the Sheikh in a friendly way I could hardly have had a more favourable opportunity than that which I have just used. I had invited him, in the first place, to open his mind and express himself freely to me, and had assured him of my desire to help him where possible. In regard to all five topics, mention of which had preceded that of the Customs question, I had lent a patient and sympathetic ear, and had promised to represent his wishes or circumstances forthwith, and favourably, to the Government of India. One might reasonably have expected that this would have paved the way for a sensible exchange of views at all events, and an explanation of some of the reasons which make the reformation of Sheikh Esa's Customs so unpalatable to him. On the contrary, he was as dogged and unbending as he could well be, much as he was last year, when I first endeavoured to persuade him to do justice to the injured Persians—an attitude, I would remark, which he changed altogether two months later, when he at length realized that we intended to enforce our demands. He would give no reasons; he practically would not discuss the question, except to keep repeating that he had given his answer several times before, and that it was the same now.

4. I do not think I need say much of the past history of our negotiations in connection with the Bahrein Customs, for the Government of India are already familiar with it. It was fully gone into in their despatch dated the 21st April, 1904, to His Majesty's Secretary of State,* on the subject of our representation at Bahrein. Since then Sheikh Esa has once been formally approached by the Political Agent; further, the subject was pointedly alluded to in the ultimatum presented to him last year, and I have now exhaustively pressed it upon him.

In fact, the record shows that since the beginning of 1898 Sheikh Esa has been authoritatively approached no less than nine times in all, by three Residents and one Viceroy in person; and I am driven unwillingly to the conclusion that there now remains no reasonable hope that in this particular matter Sheikh Esa will ever respond to our friendly advice, and that it would be humiliating to continue to expose our proposals to rejection without reason. I feel, in fact, that we have reached a point at which we must either elect to drop the question altogether during Sheikh Esa's lifetime or put the requisite measures through without consulting him further. The record leads me to think that it is the former course which Government will prefer to take, if the political outlook is held to admit of it.

5. I would ask reference here to the passage in the summary of my interview with Sheikh Esa in which I asked him if it would not be better for him to conform to our advice with a good grace rather than oblige Government to take measures without consulting him. He replied to this quite casually without exhibiting the least surprise or concern, and it is my opinion, which I think Captain Prideaux shares, that this stubborn refusal to accept our advice is in a great measure due to a desire to play to the gallery and to save his *amour-propre*. It is the same sentiment which has made him pretend outwardly to be intensely injured by Sheikh Ali's banishment, though he is no doubt very glad at heart to be spared his troublesome company.

Sheikh Esa knows that we can assume control when we choose and probably expects us to do so, and when once this is done in a way which will enable him to satisfy his ignorant entourage that it was beyond his power to prevent it, I believe he will soon settle down quietly to the inevitable and will be thankful to us in the sequel for having carried out the measure.

I venture to recommend, therefore, that the Government of India take over the Customs as early as can be conveniently arranged.

6. In expressing this view I should not omit to allude briefly to the following attendant considerations:—

(1.) Any salient measure which we take in the Gulf region nowadays is sure to evoke hostile criticism from unfriendly quarters. It goes without saying that the course now proposed will prove no exception; but the longer we delay, the more criticism we are likely to have to face, and there is surely no reason why such a consideration should deter us from a fixed purpose.

(2.) Secondly, our action at Bahrein will no doubt have an influence one way or the other on the parallel question which is pending at Muscat. I am personally inclined to

* Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Government of India, dated December 7, 1904.

think that the effect will be favourable and useful to us, and will tend to dispose the Sultan to accept the inevitable either at once or a little later when he sees the favourable financial results of the change at Bahrein. This, however, is a problem in regard to which I would prefer that the Government of India should be influenced by Major Grey's views rather than my own, as he is the officer who has immediately to deal with the Sultan in regard to the Muscat question. For the rest, apart from broad considerations of international policy lying beyond my horizon, it appears to my humble judgment not only convenient, but necessary, that we should take some early step of a kind which will, within the limits prescribed by the policy of His Majesty's Government, publicly strengthen and affirm our authority over Bahrein. At the present moment, as the Government of India are aware, the Persian Foreign Office, tutored no doubt by the Russian Legation, and encouraged by the article in the "Hablel Matin" of the 27th March, 1905, is energetically attempting to revive the old assertion of Persian rights over Bahrein. Again, foreign European merchants continue from time to time to discuss their claims to extraterritoriality and Consular intervention in regard to their affairs. The assumption of the Bahrein Customs will in all probability put a stop to such indications, whereas there can be little doubt that if we do not nip them in the bud they will gather force as time goes on.

7. As to the financial aspect of the question, I solicit reference to my predecessor's letter dated the 18th February, 1904, of which little modification is needed to bring the information contained in it up to date.

It will be seen from paragraph 4 thereof that four-fifths of the revenue is farmed by Messrs. Gungaram Tikamdass for the years February 1906 to January 1908 for 96,000 rupees per annum.

On the account for these two years I understand that Sheikh Esa has already received 76,000 rupees in advance, which he has presumably spent, and that he now receives from the farmer 4,500 rupees per mensem.

The existing farm for the remaining one-fifth of the revenue expires in April 1906, when Sheikh Esa proposes to take it over himself, or what he is pleased to call taking it over himself. He has already within the last fortnight or so contracted loans amounting to 20,000 rupees on the security of this one-fifth, on which he has drawn bills; and he will no doubt continue to hypothecate it up to the utmost limit.

This means that he has had nearly the whole of his revenue for the year 1906-1907 in advance.

Besides this he is believed to have had a considerable portion of the value of the pearls belonging to the estate of Seyyid Khalaf, as explained in my letter of to-day's date.

His financial position, therefore, is as unsatisfactory as it could well be.

On the other hand, local merchants with the best opportunities of knowing the facts inform the Political Agent that if properly conducted not 3 lakhs, but 5, could be realized from the Customs.

8. The question of the treatment to be accorded to the British Indian firm which at present has the farm does not seem to be a very difficult or complicated problem.

They have repeatedly been informed of our intention to administrate the Customs, and it would seem to be quite sufficient for us to pay them the balance due to them of the price which they paid for the farm, with reasonable interest, by monthly or quarterly instalments recovered from the customs receipts.

If the Government of India preferred to pay off the whole in cash at once, as suggested in paragraph 7 of Colonel Kemball's letter under reference, so much the better. In any case a statement of account which was correct to-day might require modification to-morrow, so that it would be necessary that the precise figures should be finally gone into on the spot should the Government of India decide to move at an early date in the direction of the assumption of the Bahrein Customs.

Inclosure 15 in No. 8.

Memorandum of what passed at an Interview between the Sheikh of Bahrein, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and the Political Agent at Bahrein, on February 14, 1906.

THE weather being somewhat uncertain and Sheikh Esa having asked to be excused coming over to Manama as he was suffering from a cold and cough, which made it inadvisable for him to go abroad, Captain Prideaux and I arranged to spend the day at Muharraq on the 14th February. I had requested Sheikh Hamad the evening before to ask his father to make a list of or keep in mind any topics which he might wish to discuss with me.

We found the Sheikh apparently in his usual health, and he said he was feeling better, but he was actually troubled with a slight cough. He was accompanied by his three sons, Hamad, Mahomed, and Abdulla, and a young son of Sheikh Hamad, who, however, disappeared before we began to talk business.

After the usual formal inquiries had been exchanged and coffee served I told the Sheikh that I had come over to stay for two or three days, and, reminding him of my message of the evening before, asked him if there were any special matters which he desired to discuss with me.

He replied at once in the affirmative, saying that there were two or three matters affecting him in regard to which there had been neglect ("alec") on our part. Being asked to explain, he went on to say that the first subject to which he referred was that of the murder of his kinsman Sheikh Selman-bin-Diaij by Behaih tribesmen. More than five years, he said, had now passed since the outrage had occurred; but Government had persistently refused to let him exact reparation himself, and yet had not seen fit to exact it for him. At this point I sent for my file of the case, which, among others, I had brought over, and explained to him, as far as was permissible, what had passed up to the last assertion of the Porte that Turkish troops had killed thirty-seven out of fifty men concerned. The accuracy of this Sheikh Esa denied, and further contended that any men who had been killed had not been killed in connection with this case at all, and had, indeed, inflicted much severer losses on the Turkish troops than they had suffered themselves.

To the suggestion that after all the incident in question was really an item, and not the first one, in a tribal blood feud, he replied that this was true, but that it was the Behaih who had begun the feud, and that they were still several lives to the good. He continued that he only wanted justice; that if Government could not give it him in one of the forms in which he asked for it they should at least let him exact reparation in his own way. The two alternatives were, he repeated, the delivery to him of three Behaih for execution, or the payment of blood-money for the lives of those murdered and compensation for their looted property. He added, in conclusion, that he would prefer the delivery of three men for execution to the monetary settlement. I explained to him that the delivery to him of three possibly innocent men for execution in cold blood would not be a course to which the British Government could lend itself, but with regard to the rest, I would make another representation to Government.

Sheikh Esa then went on to prefer his second complaint, which was with reference to the piracies of Ahmed-bin-Selman. Here, again, he said Government had taken no effective punitive or deterrent measures, and yet, as in the Behaih case, we would not allow him to act for himself as he desired. He admitted that Captain Prideaux had done his utmost by personal effort, and said that the "Sphinx" had indeed cruised about, but that this was of no use, for the pirates could see her miles off. He continued that his interests had in these matters suffered immensely; that the pirates from not being punished were becoming, or had become, the more audacious, and might at any time be expected to cross over and commit raids on outlying villages of the Bahrein Islands. I explained to him how Government were not in the least forgetful of this matter and were doing their utmost to suppress the piracies, and I went on to repeat to him Captain Prideaux' argument that his own measures would probably only end in the murder of a few innocent people; but he would not be convinced, and said he either claimed effective steps on the part of Government or permission to suppress the marauders in his own way.

It is, I think, doubtful if he really imagines that he has any well-founded grievance in this connection, and Captain Prideaux considered that he had only put the matter forward as something specious to complain about.

Next Sheikh Esa referred once again to the alleged throwing down of the flagstaff on the house at Manama which had been the residence of Sheikh Ali. I asked him had he not been assured by the Political Agent that the flagstaff had not been thrown down, and had he not at the time withdrawn the statement; why, then, did he persistently return to the charge? He replied that he only knew what his people at Manama told him. I rejoined that he had the Political Agent's word for it and my word for it that the flagstaff had not been thrown down either with our knowledge or by our orders, and that it had not, in fact, been thrown down at all, but had fallen down in a gale of wind. I continued that it was incredible that, in spite of our repeated assurances, he should continue to give credence to the malicious statements of mischief-makers who might tell him the contrary. I continued that, as far as the flag was concerned, he flew it on Manama Fort, and could fly it anywhere else he liked if he so desired. With regard to the house itself, I told him that it had never been the decision of Government to confiscate it outright, as I had clearly told him. The simple fact was that Sheikh Ali had lived in it under the Bahrein flag and had used the circumstance that it was called "Government House" to assist his endeavours to interfere in the Government of Manama and to display opposition to the Sheikh. For this reason, when Sheikh Ali had been removed, it had been decided that until we were assured that affairs in Manama were in a more settled state it was not desirable that the house should be occupied by any of his family. I concluded that if he set such store on the possession of the house, and if he showed himself amenable to advice in other ways, I was quite ready to ask Government for permission to hand the house over to him on the distinct understanding that it was a private house, and that he would let no one live in it at any time whose tenancy was not approved by the Political Agent. He readily agreed to this and thanked me for my readiness to further his wishes in this matter.

He finally referred to Sheikh Ali's allowance and begged that it might be reduced. He said that according to his information Sheikh Ali did not spend more than 100 rupees per mensem; that 200 rupees was enough and 300 rupees generous. I told him again what had passed and promised to approach Government on the subject again.

Taking up the thread now on my own behalf, I said that while Government had been obliged to show him last year that they could not be trifled with, they wished him to understand that they were anxious to help him and advance the prosperity of his State in every way they could, and in the same spirit, with regard to the matters just discussed, I added that I would represent them sympathetically to Government.

I then turned to his Petition to the Secretary of State and his Excellency the Viceroy, and asked Sheikh Esa what had prompted him to use an arms manufacturer as a medium for the transmission of his Petition when he had a Political Agent with him whose duty it was to represent his communications to Government. He replied that he had sent it as he had not received favourable or definite answers to his requests, but had not intended specially to send the document through an arms merchant; that he had simply given it to an "Arab" to post and that the latter happened to employ the medium of the firm in question. Referring to the contents of it, I asked him why he made such a prominent grievance of this prohibition against the importation of arms at this stage and never before; why had he not done so in the first instance? Did he experience any difficulty in getting leave to import what he wanted for his legitimate use?

Sheikh Esa replied that the Agreement had been taken from him arbitrarily; that he had simply been shown the Sultan of Muscat's Agreement and a draft like it and had been told that he must sign the latter and signed it without due reflection; that he had no difficulty in getting what he wanted for his requirements, but that the prohibition had proved a great loss to him in the matter of customs revenue. Finally he explained that he had not intended to put the matter forward as a grievance but rather as an explanation in the hope that Government would show him favour in the matter. I tried to elicit from him the approximate amount which he considered he formerly received from duty on arms, but he professed not to be able to tell me. I reminded him that he was not alone in the matter, but that the Sheikhs of Koweit and the Trucial Coast had notified similar prohibitions. I added that I would represent what he had just said to Government but could not say what their answer would be.

Having referred again, as I looked through the Memorial, to the disposal of Sheikh Ali's house therein alluded to, I repeated my readiness to help him in this and other items if he was ready to listen generally to my advice in important affairs. Sheikh Esa replied, "What sort of matters do you mean?" I replied, "Any important matters of administration in regard to which Government gives you advice for your good." He replied, "I must consider whether such and such a measure is for my good or not, and

if I decide that it is I will inform Government, and if I consider that it does not suit me then I will inform Government likewise." "Well," I replied, "you mentioned just now that there had been neglect ('alec') on the part of Government in regard to some of your affairs; I repeat the assurance that there has been no neglect, but on the contrary your affairs have been constantly under the consideration of Government for the last year, as you may judge from this bulky file before me, and there is one subject which it is evident to me from the correspondence which has passed Government will not entirely drop, and that is the matter of your Customs." He replied quickly, "I have already given you an answer on that subject, and have no other answer to give." I continued, "Let me explain. Government see you constantly in debt and not knowing where to turn for money, because you only get 1,20,000 rupees from your Customs when you might get three or four lakhs. Their simple wish is that you should get the full benefit of your customs revenue and that your State and yourself should profit by it. There is no wish to annex your Customs nor interfere unnecessarily in your administration; all that is wanted is that you should accept from Government trained employes, of a stamp which your own following cannot supply—men who would conduct your Customs on regular lines and pay you the resulting profit." He replied that he had discussed all this with Colonel Meade, Colonel Kemball, and myself before, and had always given the same answer, and his answer was the same now, whether it be written or spoken.

I then appealed to his three sons and asked them whether they could not influence their father, but they said they were in his hands. The old Sheikh went on to say that when the Bunnia's contract had expired (they have only just started a new one lasting till January 1908) he would take the Customs into his own hands, but would have none other than his own servants, Arabs of Bahrein, and that he would not have any one from Government. I repeatedly asked him to explain to me in a friendly way what were the reasons which prompted him to adopt this attitude, but he answered each time that he had no reasons to give except that he was not prepared to accept the measure proposed in any form.

I then said to him, "When I tell you frankly before your sons that this improvement in the administration of your Customs is a matter with regard to which Government consider that it is incumbent upon you to conform to their advice, repeatedly and seriously given, and when I assure you that they will surely not accept a complete refusal on your part, especially when it is accompanied by no reasons whatever, sound or otherwise, do you not think you would be much better advised to agree to the adoption of our proposals wholly or partially, of your own accord, rather than that Government should be driven to dispense with your acquiescence and do what is best for you whether you like or not?" He replied, "If Government wish to do so against my wishes it is of course within their power, but it will not be done with my consent."

Again and again were the same explanations made to him and the same ground gone over as had been traversed before by Colonel Meade, Colonel Kemball, his Excellency Lord Curzon, and myself, but without the least response or result, and feeling that there was no hope of moving him from his stubborn attitude, I gradually changed the subject and went on to deal with two or three other topics which required mention.

These were—

1. The Slave Agreement from the Dowasir Shiekhs which Sheikh Esa has notified his inability to exact. (*Vide* Foreign Department letter dated the 4th September, 1905, paragraph 6.)

2. The case of the estate of Seyyid Khalaf and outstanding British claim against it. (*Vide* last inclosure to letter dated the 16th July, 1905, from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department.)

3. The advisability of making the Political Agent the referee in commercial cases, investigated by the Bahrein native Majlis, in which European foreigners are parties.

Upon all these matters Government will be addressed separately, and therefore there seems no need for me to record in detail all that passed with regard to them here.

After thus spending five hours with the Sheikh and his sons, the Political Agent and I returned to Manama.

The Political Agent and I noted with some surprise that Sheikh Esa made no request regarding the return of Sheikh Ali, nor did he make the slightest allusion to this subject.

In conclusion, I should mention that the Political Agent, on further acquaintance with Sheikh Ali's house, considers it too awkward and unsanitary for habitation by British Government officials.

Inclosure 16 in No. 8.

Government of India to Major Cox.

Sir,

Simla, May 22, 1906.

I AM directed to refer to the correspondence ending with your letter dated the 25th February, 1906, on the subject of Sheikh Esa's Memorial.

2. I am to request that you will now forward to the Sheikh a reply couched in the following terms. The necessary references to communications made by yourself or your predecessors or by the Assistant Political Agent to the Sheikh should be inserted in the letter:—

"The Government of India have received the Memorial, dated the 2nd October, 1905, which you addressed to the Viceroy and Governor-General, and have given it their careful consideration. You complain, firstly, that Representatives of the British Government obliged you to interdict the sale of arms, and that you were thereby deprived of an advantage enjoyed by all the Arab Chiefs along the Arabian Coast. I am to remind you in the first place that in 1895, when you were in danger of an attack by Sheikh Qasim-bin-Thani, you yourself restricted the importation of arms by granting a concession to your Vizier to import arms and ammunition subject to the express condition that arms were not to be sold at Bahrein or on the neighbouring Arab Coast. Your object in imposing this restriction was to curtail as far as possible the importation of arms which might be used against you and your family. Shortly afterwards, when you heard that the holders of the concession were evading the condition which prohibited sales to the inhabitants of Bahrein or on the Arab Coast, you ordered your Vizier to stop the importation altogether. In pursuance of this policy you attached a large quantity of imported arms in January 1898 on your own initiative and without being prompted or advised to do so in any way by Representatives of the British Government.

"In February 1898 the Resident at Bushire informed you of the desire of the Government of India to prohibit traffic in arms, and you at once, and without any hesitation or protest, issued a notification announcing that you had resolved to assist the British and Persian Government in suppressing the trade in arms and ammunition between Bahrein, India, and Persia. In April 1898, at the request of the Resident, you issued, again without protest or objection of any kind, a revised notification prohibiting absolutely the importation of arms and ammunition into, and the exportation of the same from, the Island of Bahrein. In this notification you referred to a previous notification which you had spontaneously issued in January 1896 forbidding the sale of arms and ammunition to your subjects. In view of these facts, the Government of India are unable to understand on what grounds you now represent that you were forced by British Representatives to interdict the sale of arms. Further, you are well aware that the Sheikh of Koweit and the Sheikhs of the Trucial Coast have similarly prohibited the traffic in arms in their territories, and your statement that you are deprived of an advantage enjoyed by all the Arab Chiefs along the Arabian Coast is therefore incorrect. Finally, I am to remind you that the people of Bahrein in general have no need for more arms than they possess, and that it is always open to you to procure the consent of the Government of India to import whatever arms you may yourself need for special reasons. It is to your own interest that the importation of arms should be restricted, but apart from this the Government of India would not consider for a moment the possibility of cancelling or modifying the Agreement into which you have entered, since it is essential, for the preservation of the public peace, that the traffic in arms along the Arabian Coast should be rigidly confined and limited.

"In the second place you complain that an English Representative has been substituted for the former Mussulman Representative of the British Government in your State, and that, as a consequence of his interference in the internal administration of the State, you were forced to arrest your relative, Sheikh Ali, and surrender him to the British authorities for an imaginary offence. In reply to this I am to remind you that the political and commercial conditions in Bahrein have considerably altered of recent years, and that in consequence it has become necessary for the Government of India to

have a more efficient Representative, on whose advice you can more confidently rely. It is also well known to you that the great increase of trade enjoyed by the merchants of Bahrein is largely due to the presence of a British officer in your island.

"With regard to the case of Sheikh Ali, your nephew, you know that he was punished because he rebelled against your orders and set at naught the commands of the British Government. I have already addressed you on this subject in my letter dated the 7th June, 1905, and it is not necessary for me to say anything more with regard to the matter here.

"Next you represent that your flag-mast was thrown down by the British authorities. The Government of India cannot believe that you are actuated by serious motives in preferring this complaint after the Political Agent has given you a personal assurance, which you have accepted, to the effect that the flagstaff was not lowered, but was blown down in a heavy gale.

"Finally, the Government of India are unable to understand your allegation that you receive no reply to the representations which you prefer. I, who am the Representative of the Government of India in the Persian Gulf, have written to you in reply to your complaints explaining the policy of the Government of India and advising you for your good, while your Political Agent, Captain Prideaux, has constantly listened to your grievances and assisted you with his counsels. In this connection I am to remind you that it is the duty of British Representatives to communicate fully to Government the circumstances and wishes of Chiefs to whom they are accredited, and that in view of this fact the Government of India can only consider your communications when received through the responsible officers with whom you are in touch. It was therefore both unnecessary and incorrect for you to forward a copy of your Petition to the Secretary of State for India through the medium of a commercial firm."

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. E. HOLLAND,
Assistant Secretary to the Government of India.

[23578]

No. 9.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 11.)

WITH reference to this Office letter of to-day's date, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 3rd instant, relative to the Muscat Arbitration Award.

India Office, July 11, 1906.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 3, 1906.

MY telegram dated the 21st May last, regarding Muscat Award. I fully indorse Cox' views, which will be forwarded by mail of the 5th instant, respecting Muscat negotiations.

[23573]

No. 10.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 11.)

WITH reference to this Office letter of the 7th July, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 10th July, relative to the Muscat Arbitration.

India Office, July 11, 1906.

Inclosure in No. 10.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

July 10, 1906.

YOUR telegram of the 5th July. Muscat arbitration.

A report from Cox, No. 67, was forwarded to you by mail of the 5th July. Please, if possible, await its receipt.

For local reasons, having regard to strong feeling on subject entertained by Sultan, a settlement on lines indicated therein seems to us much to be preferred. In the event, however, of His Majesty's Government deciding to follow the course described in your telegram of the 5th instant, we would suggest that when a dhow on the list is lost, sold, or destroyed, and another vessel is substituted for her, British Consul should be notified at time of such transfer, and that a list of survivors and their protected dhows should be furnished annually to the British Consul by the French Consul. There would be risk, otherwise, of misunderstandings, owing to the considerable number of vessels under French protection.

A certain M. Caracalla, who apparently intends to engage in the arms traffic, has recently arrived at Muscat.

Should proposed concessions be made by His Majesty's Government, we trust corresponding compliance in respect of arms traffic will be shown by French.

(Repeated to Major Cox and Political Agent, Muscat.)

[23973]

No. 11.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 471. Secret. Confidential.)

Sir,

Therapia, July 10, 1906.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 843 of the 27th November last, I have the honour to report that I learnt through a secret and confidential source that the Ottoman Ministry of War has lately received despatches from Moustafa Hilmi Bey, Commandant of Nejd, calling attention to the visits of British ships of war to the Katr Coast. Hilmi Bey refers to a previous report sent in October last, in which he announced the arrival of His Majesty's ship "Sphinx" at Ojeir and Katif with the British Consul (sic) at Bahrein on board, and their meeting with the Kaimakam of Katif, and to a later despatch of March of this year, in which he had reported that the "Consul" had again come in a ship to the Katr Coast, and on certain pretences had taken with him certain Sheikhs, and had used threats to Ottoman subjects, and was endeavouring to disturb the minds of the population.

The Commandant has forwarded a letter from Major Nimet Effendi of the 3rd Battalion of the 43rd Regiment at Katr, of which the following is a translation:—

"On Thursday morning at one o'clock (Turkish) the 28th instant, o.s. (presumably May), a two-funnelled British steamer arrived and anchored ten minutes' distance out. An officer was sent to make inquiries, but at the same time the steamer's boat came to the shore with the Naibs of Bushire and Bahrein, the captain and a dragoman. On being asked why they had come they replied that they had business with Sheikh Abdullah. They were requested to address themselves to me, and after they had rested a little we discussed matters. They said they had been the day before to Sheikh Jasim-eth-Thani and had the intention of touching at other places on the coast, their object being to warn the Sheikhs to put down the piratical acts of Ahmed-es-Selman. We conversed in suitable language, and I pointed out to them that it was not proper that they should come without orders, and that in such matters they should have consulted the Vali and act according to his instructions; they then returned to the steamer, which left. From the inquiries which I made, both open and secret, it appears that their object was to force the Sheikhs to put down these piracies or else to give them a document stating that they were powerless to do so, which would be undesirable, as your Excellency will admit."

Moustafa Hilmi Bey confirming the statements of Major Nimet Effendi states that it is essential that the persons arrested on account of Ahmed-es-Selman's piracies should be punished so as to afford no scope for such intervention. Bin Na-zra and the

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G

negro, Salim, two of the pirate's companions had been arrested at Katif, but though Salim avowed his guilt, as proved by the papers sent to the Mutessarif, the latter ordered him to be released. The Commandant of Nejd further complains that the Mutessarif has given no effect to his request for the despatch of the Turkish gun-boat "Kilid-el-Bahr" to patrol the coast so as to deprive the English of their excuse for interfering, and he concludes his report by again requesting instructions as to how he is to act with regard to such foreigners who arrive on the coast.

I think it is probable that the somewhat vague complaints made to you by the Turkish Ambassador on the 14th ultimo, as reported in your despatch No. 250 of the 21st ultimo, relative to certain alleged proceedings of the British Agent at Bahrein may have been based upon the reports received by the Sublime Porte from the Turkish military authorities in the Persian Gulf, respecting the visits of His Majesty's ships to the coast between Bahrein and Koweit, of which the despatches which I have quoted above from the Commandant of Nejd and the Major commanding the troops at Katr may be taken as specimens.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[23976]

No. 12.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 474. Confidential.)

Sir,

Therapia, July 11, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 249 of the 21st ultimo and its inclosure, in which you were so good as to ask for my observations on the scheme suggested by the Italian Government, whereby each Power interested in the security of navigation in the Red Sea should undertake the supervision of that portion of the Arabian coast which is opposite to its African possessions.

I venture to express the opinion that their proposal, if accepted, would be tantamount to giving the Italian Government the possession of a desirable group of islands in the Red Sea, but as their maritime operations and surveillance would presumably be confined to the district comprised between Massowah, the Dahlak Islands, and the southern limits of the Colony of Erythraea, no security would be afforded to the shipping of those Powers who have no possessions on either coast within the area where piratical attacks are most frequent.

The scheme has the appearance of a tentative suggestion emanating from the Italian "Colonial Bureau" with a view to establishing spheres of influence in the Red Sea, and as such it does not seem to me desirable, as it would in all probability lead to the question of Germany's pretensions or ambitions to possess a coaling station in the Farsan Islands being again raised in an aggravated form.

I do not consider that the scheme is a practicable one which would be calculated to give security to British shipping in the Red Sea, nor that it is likely to meet with any but the strongest opposition from the Turkish Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

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No. 13.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 477.)

Sir,

Therapia, July 10, 1906.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 456 of the 3rd instant, and to previous correspondence respecting the attacks made by Arabs upon a steamer of the Tigris and Euphrates Steam Navigation Company, I have the honour to report that, having received a telegram from His Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, dated yesterday, of which a paraphrase is herewith inclosed, announcing fresh disturbances among the Arabs at Amara and another attack upon a Turkish steamer, I at once made most urgent representations to the Porte with a view to immediate measures being taken for the protection of the river traffic and Messrs. Lynch and Company's steamers.

I have several times lately, as you are aware from my despatch No. 422 of the 19th ultimo, called the attention of the Imperial Government to the disturbed

condition of affairs in the Numtefih, with the result that the special Commission, referred to in my despatch No. 404 of the 12th ultimo, was said to inquire into the situation and reorganize the 6th Army Corps, whose head-quarters are at Bagdad, as well as the gendarmerie of the Vilayets of Bagdad and Bussorah.

This Commission left last Thursday, and, provided that Perter Pasha, the Special Commissioner, is allowed a free hand, I trust that a more satisfactory condition of affairs will soon be apparent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

P.S.—July 11. I have just received a later telegram from Mr. Consul Crow, informing me that the Vali of Bagdad arrived at Bussorah on the 10th instant. He also reports that the steam-ship "Medjidieh" reached Amara in safety. The Arabs threw stones and assumed a threatening attitude, but did not fire on the vessel.

N. R. O'C.

Inclosure in No. 13.

Consul Crow to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 52.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Bussorah, July 9, 1906.

OWING to disturbances by Seyhood's Arabs below Amara the river traffic has been interrupted. British merchants complain that they are unable to fulfil their contracts owing to grain-lighters being held up.

I have received a report from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad to the effect that an attack has been made upon a Turkish steamer. I cannot verify this, however, owing to the Arabs having cut the telegraph. Lynch's steamer "Medjidieh" left Bussorah yesterday, and grave fears are entertained for her safety.

No steps are being taken to check the disorders, and the authorities seem paralyzed.

[25119]

No. 14.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. des Graz.

(No. 123.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 19, 1906.

COUNT BOSDARI asked me whether I could yet give any reply to a Memorandum which the Italian Government had submitted on the subject of policing parts of the coasts of Arabia.

I said we were on the point of sending a reply, but it did not appear to us to be desirable to divide the Red Sea into spheres of influence, and the reply would be to that effect. It would, however, be sent in a few days.

Count Bosdari also asked me very particularly whether we had any information about the Turkish trouble in the Yemen. Was it not the case that things were going badly, and that the Turks were sending more troops?

I said I understood there had been some trouble among the Turkish troops themselves, and the Turkish Government had for some time been continually sending more troops, but we had no special information. In fact, we had taken great pains not to mix in this matter at all. So long as the trouble did not come over the Aden frontier, we regarded it as not concerning us. In fact, it would be dangerous for any European Power to intervene, for any action of that kind might excite suspicion in the Mohammedan mind of designs upon the holy places of their religion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

[24985]

No. 15.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 487.)

Sir,

Therapia, July 18, 1906.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 445 of the 1st instant relative to the state of affairs in the Yemen, I have the honour to state that I have received a telegraphic report from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeida to the effect that the condition of that province is at present quiet.

Dr. Richardson states, however, that certain rebel bands have displayed some activity near Amran Hagga, and that several skirmishes have been reported during the last month. He also refers to a mutiny of some reservist battalions, which was finally crushed by artillery fire at Sanaa. It may, I think, be assumed that this incident is the same one that Colonel Surtees reported in his despatch No. 36 of the 1st instant, copy of which I had the honour to forward to you in my despatch above referred to.

Dr. Richardson concludes by saying that 3,800 reinforcements have disembarked since the 5th instant, and that a full report has been sent by post, copy of which I shall have the honour to transmit to you in due course.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

N. R. O'CONOR.

[25354]

No. 16.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 25.)

WITH reference to Sir A. Godley's letter of the 13th July, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 5th July, relative to the Muscat Arbitration Award.

It is requested that the original inclosure may be returned to this Office as soon as done with.

India Office, July 24, 1906.

Inclosure 1 in No. 16.

Major Grey to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Muscat, June 14, 1906.

AWARD negotiations.

Please see my letter dated the 21st April, 1906, and its inclosures. The French Government have telegraphed to the French Consul here that his project for a settlement has not been received in London, and he is asking me. I have informed him that it was dispatched to the Government of India on the 21st April, 1906. May I tell him that the matter is out of our hands now?

Addressed to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

Inclosure 2 in No. 16.

Major Grey to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Muscat, June 12, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, copy of a letter dated the 12th June, 1906, and its inclosure, which I have addressed to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

W. G. GREY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 16.

Major Grey to Major Cox.

Sir,

Muscat, June 12, 1906.

IN continuation of my letter dated the 21st April last, on the subject of the French flag in Oman, I have the honour to state that yesterday I had an interview with Sheikh Mohammed-ben-Rachid-el-Rotley, No. 20 in the French list of dhow-owners, and attach a copy of the statement made by him.

2. It will be seen that his evidence agrees exactly with that formerly collected by me. Owners Nos. 9 and 14 in the French list have apparently each acquired a dhow within the last few weeks, which fact should not, in my opinion, alter their status in regard to the question of their authorization.

3. As this statement may be of use to His Majesty's Government, I am sending a copy to the Political Secretary at the India Office direct to save time.*

4. A copy of this letter and its inclosure has been forwarded to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, Simla.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

W. G. GREY.

Inclosure 4 in No. 16.

Memorandum.

MOHAMMED-BEN-RACHID-EL-ROTLEY appeared before me this day and stated as follows:—

I belong to the Beni Boo Ali tribe of Oman, and am a subject of the Sultan of Muscat, as were my father and grandfather before me. I was born at Aiga, adjoining Sur, in Oman, and am still residing there. I have one boat, which sails under a French flag; it is named in the paper given to me by the French "Sahala." I know the following persons, and know them to possess dhows as follows:—

Name.	Number of Dhows.
1. Mohammed-ben-Abdallah-ben-Sultan	2
2. Abdallah-ben-Khamis-ben-Ali	2
3. Abdallah-ben-Khamis-ben-M'sellem	2
4. Salem-ben-Selim-oued-Sehele	1
5. Djouma-ben-Saïd-oued-Belal	1
6. Rachid-ben-Khamis-ben-Rachid	1
7. Seyyid Ali-ben-Ahmed (just renewed)	1
8. Salem-ben-M'sellem-ben-Rebiya	1
9. Selim-ben-Thabet-el-Moukheni	1
10. M'barek-ben-Ahmed Ar Rezigi	1
11. Hoded-ben-Nasib (resides in Batina, has recently procured a dhow)	1
12. Seif-ben-Souleiman (has just returned to Batina)	1
13. Abdallah-ben-Mohammed-ben-Rachid Temmami	1
14. Mohammed-ben-Selim-oued-Aboud	1
(This man I have known for forty years; he never possessed more than one boat.)	
15. Ali-ben-Saïd Temmami	0
(This man is also an old friend; he had one boat six or seven years ago, but sold it.)	
16. Mohammed-ben-Rachid-el-Malky	0
(This man had one boat, which was wrecked two years ago; I have known him for over twenty years, and he never had more than one.)	
(The last three persons are all subjects of the Sultan of Muscat, born in Oman.)	
Total (including one possessed by witness)	18

N.B.—The above persons are Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 in the French list, and the witness is No. 20.

(Signed)

W. G. GREY, Major,
Officiating Political Agent and His Britannic Majesty's
Consul, Muscat.

Muscat, June 11, 1906.

* Vide Pol. 17 (in type)

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Inclosure 5 in No. 16.

Major Grey to Government of India.

Sir, I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, copy of a letter, dated the 16th June, 1906, which I have addressed to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

Muscat, June 16, 1906.
I have, &c.
(Signed) W. G. GREY.

Inclosure 6 in No. 16.

Major Grey to Major Cox.

Sir, I HAVE the honour to refer to my Secret telegram of the 14th instant in connection with the Award negotiations in the French flag difficulty, and to give a brief account of the circumstances which led to its dispatch.

2. M. Laronce received a telegram from Paris on the 13th instant, informing him that his project for settlement has not yet been received in London, and he called upon me on the 14th to inquire how this was. I informed him that I had forwarded a copy to the Government of India by the earliest opportunity, but he seemed to think I had broken faith with him in not sending another to the Foreign Office direct. I pointed out that I was not authorized to do this, and he then inquired as to the views of the Government of India in regard to his project. I was not able to give him any information on this point, but suggested that, as we had failed to come to an agreement in regard to the list of dhows and dhow-owners through no fault of mine, he could hardly blame me if the settlement was now taken out of our hands. M. Laronce begged me to communicate with the Government of India without delay with the object of ascertaining their views, and the interview then terminated. My colleague seems to have had hopes of hustling His Majesty's Government into a settlement of the question before they were in possession either of full information or of the views of the Government of India.

3. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, Simla.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. G. GREY.

Inclosure 7 in No. 16.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Sir, I HAVE the honour, as directed, to record my views upon the present position in reference to the interpretation of the Muscat Award, as set forth in the letters marginally cited,* from the Political Agent at Muscat to my address.

2. In the communication first quoted Major Grey, who had been directed to report the net result of his negotiations with his colleague, enumerates five points with regard to which he and M. Laronce have found it impossible to come to an agreement. These can be more conveniently considered under three heads:—

I. The Legal Interpretation of Part II, Item 2, of the Award.

M. Laronce still claims that, once it is admitted that a particular Muscati falls within one of the categories authorized under Part I of the Award, then, under Part II—

(a.) He is entitled to fly the French flag over any and every dhow which he now possesses or may ever possess, and is not limited to the dhow or dhows specifically mentioned by name in the revised French list of the 4th March, 1906;

(b.) He is entitled to replace any dhow lost or sold.

* Dated May 15 and June 12, 1906.

Point (a) has already been thoroughly gone into in connection with Major Grey's telegram of the 3rd December, 1905, to the Foreign Department.

On that occasion the Government of India, relying on the reading of the Award as a whole, and by the light of Mr. Ronald Graham's explanatory despatch of the 8th August, 1904, held that if an individual's authorization was originally a general one for all his dhows, then he would retain that general right under the terms of the Award; but that if, on the other hand, the original authorization were for individual dhow or dhows by name, then authorization for these same dhows only could be claimed under the Award. This view was indorsed by His Majesty's Secretary of State in his telegram dated the 21st February, 1906.

Now, with reference to the above, it will be seen from the correspondence that, on being asked to produce a copy of the original authorization for each dhow claimed, or to quote the date of first issue, the French Consul has expressed his inability to comply; nevertheless, he cannot dispute the evidence available in our recorded specimens of "Titres de Navigation," which warrants the presumption that in the past the authorizations issued have in all cases been made out for single dhows by name, and not in a general form. But, acting no doubt on instructions from his Government, M. Laronce claims that the first authorization, even though only issued for a single dhow, carried with it the right to fly the French flag over all dhows which the owner might ever possess.

The local officers have done their best no doubt to come to an understanding generally, but, seeing that the views of their respective Governments, and the instructions which they have received on this point, are so divergent, it was not possible that they should be able to settle it themselves. It does not seem to me that the French view can hold water for a moment, but the reason for their anxiety to hurry us into accepting it is not far to seek. If our interpretation is accepted, then the number of dhows entitled to sail under French colours will be limited to such of those mentioned by name in the French list as the inquiries of our Representatives on the spot prove to be the sole property of persons recognized by the Award, and to have received their authorizations before the committal of the issues to The Hague Tribunal. These will be very few—not more than the fourteen provisionally admitted by Major Grey—and it will be a simple matter to keep a check on them in the future, even if we agree to allow them to be replaced within the lifetime of their owners, so long as the original name is adhered to.

On the other hand, if the French carry their point, and it is held that the fact of having received an authorization for one dhow entitles an owner to fly the flag over all dhows of which he may ever become possessed, then after the negotiations are once concluded we shall have no check whatever, nor any practical means of knowing at any given time how many and what dhows are sailing under the French flag. French Consuls will pursue their hobby just as unscrupulously in the future as they have in the past; on the pretext of part-ownership the dhows of all a flag-holder's kinsmen will be registered in his name, and in the result the Award, which we have been at infinite pains to win, will be shorn of half its effect. It is of the utmost importance to us that the notification which will be ultimately promulgated among the subjects of the Sultan of Muscat shall contain the names, not only of the persons which have qualified, but also of the dhows which are entitled to carry the flag.

There can, I submit, be no doubt that the interpretation which we wish to impose is the one intended by the framers of the Award, and I earnestly hope that nothing will deter us from the endeavour to secure its acceptance.

Possibly His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will succeed in convincing the French Government that our reading of the terms of the Award is the correct and legitimate one. If, however, his efforts in the direction are not successful, then I can only venture to suggest that a statement of the points at issue should be drawn up by our respective Governments in consultation and referred to an arbitrator. It may be that there is some provision for such contingencies in the Articles of working rules of The Hague Convention, and, indeed, it would seem a natural corollary to a settlement by the Tribunal that any question of doubtful interpretation of the terms of an Award should be referred for decision to the Umpire who sat on the original Court which delivered it.

Point (b) might be dealt with in the same manner; but if the French accept our views as to (a), or if it is eventually decided by an arbitrator in our favour, then we might concede (b). It would not, under these circumstances, be a very important consideration to us.

II. *The Status of the Six Individuals whom the French claim as protégés under the Anglo-French Agreement, dated May 13, 1904, in connection with Zanzibar.*

In regard to this question, the Secretary of State cabled his wishes on the 6th March. I gather that his view was that, supposing that M. Laronce agreed to accept Major Grey's suggestion that the cases of the first four men named should be decided according to the conditions of The Hague Award, then Major Grey might reciprocate by waiving discussion with regard to the last two, and that the solution of the question might subsequently be imposed upon the Sultan of Muscat.

As, however, M. Laronce did not accept Major Grey's offer, and as the French Minister, in the statement mentioned in the Secretary of State's telegram of the 26th April, evidently intended to refer to the case of all six men, we are entitled to conclude that Major Grey's offer to M. Laronce is "off," and that the status of the six Omanis mentioned in the Zanzibar Agreement remains for adjustment in London. On this presumption I venture to offer the following observations.

The two last men, Mubarek-bin-Mahomed (No. 21) and Juma-bin-Mubarek (No. 22), must both be Amiris, a well-known tribe of Oman. It is not suggested that they were born out of Oman. On our present information, therefore, I fail to see why we should in any case regard them as French protégés, even if they are admitted as flag-holders.

It is very necessary to maintain the distinction. Once in Oman, these men are in their country of origin, members of the Amiri tribe, subject to tribal conditions, and therefore properly subject to His Highness the Sultan. If we intend arbitrarily, and, as it seems to me, gratuitously, to decide that they are French protégés in Oman, in spite of the circumstances of their origin, and to remove them from the jurisdiction of the Sultan, then I submit that this is no trivial concession and should only be granted in return for some *quid pro quo* within the field of the Award.

On the whole, I venture to recommend that the following arguments be adopted in regard to all six men:—

That the Agreement of the 13th May, 1904, was only intended to be operative in Zanzibar, and not *vis-à-vis* the Sultan of Muscat.

That His Highness was not consulted and had no notice of the said Agreement.

That the Agreement was made after the submission of the French flag question to The Hague Tribunal, that is, at a time when the title of every Omani claiming to fly a French flag was under challenge and *sub judice*.

It is difficult to see how this argument can be got over, and as it is, in fact, the position already taken up by His Majesty's Government in regard to four of the men, I trust it can now be maintained in regard to all six.

In connection with this question, Major Grey has suggested, apart from the possible cession of Nos. 21 and 22 of the six above discussed, that we should offer to resign Nos. 8 and 13 also, if the French acquiesce in the cases of Nos. 17 to 20 being governed by the Award.

In view of the observations above recorded, I can hardly indorse this recommendation at present, but in any case there is no hurry for a decision on this point. On the one hand, M. Laronce asserts that they were born in the Comoro, and Major Grey may have recorded corroborative evidence on this point; but, on the other hand, it appears that either these persons or their fathers are included in previous lists furnished by his predecessors of subjects of His Highness flying the French flags and "residing at Sur" (*vide* Nos. 9 and 11 of Major Hayes Sadler's list of 1894 and Nos. 14 and 15 of Major Fagan's list of 1898). Even if they were born in the Comoro Isles as suggested, nevertheless if they can be shown to be domiciled or to keep their families and their dhows at Sur, they should surely be regarded as coming within the scope of the Award, and there seems no obligation on our part to consider them French protégés in Oman, although their title to fly the flag may be made good.

All I suggest in this case is that the two men should not be conceded until a little more information is available with regard to them. I will ask the Political Agent to supply it.

III. *The Final Verification of the Revised List of Protégés and Dhows presented by the French Consul on March 4, 1906 (with a view to its inclusion in the Notification subsequently to be issued to the subjects of the Sultan of Muscat).*

I do not see that anything final can be done under this head until issue (1) has been decided in Europe. When that fundamental point has been set at rest our local

officers will be able to proceed with the verification of the list, and if in the end one or two individuals remain about whom they cannot agree it might be arranged to split the difference, one being eliminated and another conceded.

In the working out of this list our interests and those of the Sultan can only be safely guarded by the submission of every item, be it owner or dhow, to the closest investigation. If the French Representative has any intention of acting straightforwardly in his negotiations with ours, there should be little or no difficulty in the matter of the verification of dhows, even if there is as to the title of owners. It is on the reduction of this list to the smallest possible limits that depends the degree of benefit which the interests of the Sultan and ourselves will derive from the Award, and I am of opinion that before the roll is finally accepted His Highness should be given an opportunity of putting forward any valid objection which he may have to the inclusion of any particular owner or dhow. He can be depended upon to behave reasonably in this regard.

It is only necessary to review the history of the list and to peruse Major Grey's comments upon it in order to realize the perfunctory, not to say unscrupulous, manner in which the framing of it has been conducted by French officials, with the support of their Government. For this they cannot plead the excuse of haste, because they have been periodically pressed for it for some years past.

After evading its presentation as long as possible—

They first claimed..	..	..	..	..	30 owners and 55 dhows.
This was subsequently reduced to ..	..	..	..	..	26 " 50 "
And later, in M. Laronce's list of the 4th March ..	..	..	..	..	22 " 46 "
While the evidence collected from several sources by ..	..	..	..	..
Major Grey reduces the number to ..	..	..	..	..	14 " 18 "

It is instructive, too, to note that among those included by the French is one Hoded-bin-Naseb, No. 14, who, if he had his deserts, should now be doing twenty-five years' penal servitude at Angola with those of his comrades who formed the Suri slaving fleet captured by the Portuguese at Samuco in 1902 with several hundred newly-caught slaves in their possession. Other facts, such as the inclusion of dead men, and men without boats, and the boats of relations, all demonstrate the untrustworthiness of the information supplied by the French Representative and the necessity for the subjection of the list to deliberate scrutiny before it is accepted.

4. In conclusion, I beg again to urge that our best course is to take our stand on the judicial interpretation of the Award. We have been at much labour and expense in order to bring about the settlement of this important question, both on the Sultan's account and our own; it was our own suggestion to refer it to The Hague Tribunal; we have secured from that Tribunal a very reasonable Award, which, if fairly interpreted, will give us practically all we want.

I submit that this question of correct interpretation is no subject for *quid pro quo* negotiation, except within the field covered by the Award, and that it can in no wise be regarded by the French as unfriendly on our part to wish to have the decision of the Tribunal interpreted with judicial precision and in the manner intended by the framers of it. Of the extent of the inconvenience which may be caused to His Majesty's Government by some slight delay in the winding up of the case I am not in a position to be aware, but, speaking from the point of view of the local officer, I am convinced that we have nothing to lose by proceeding with such deliberation as will enable us to secure the utmost that the terms of the Award, judicially interpreted, will give us. In fact, it is just as much to our specific advantage to take our time and go into the details thoroughly, as it is an advantage to the French to hustle us through them.

When the Award is completely executed in the manner advocated we shall surely find the French in a much weaker position at Muscat, and after the lapse of a decent interval we shall be able to open negotiations with them with incomparably better chances of success, whether it be in regard to the arms traffic, the abrogation of the Declaration of 1862, or any other question affecting Muscat which it is important to us to have settled.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. Z. COX.

[25535]

No. 17.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 26.)

WITH reference to this Office letter of the 24th July, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 26th July, relative to the Muscat Arbitration Award.

India Office, July 26, 1906.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

July 26, 1906.

(Telegraphic.) P.

MUSCAT Arbitration. My telegram dated the 10th instant.

Following telegram dated the 21st instant received from Major Cox at Muscat:—

"As regards replacement, if safeguarded as the Government of India suggested, I respectfully concur as to expediency of granting concession; but unquestioned acceptance by us of the French list of the 4th March seems to be open to strongest possible objection.

"While it is true that Sultan's interests have been confided to us by His Highness, correspondence shows clearly that the inclusion in the notification which the Sultan is finally to issue of an authentic list of owners and dhows is agreed by all parties to be indispensable.

"I fail to see how His Highness can fairly be asked to accept and publish French list of the 4th March in view of our being so well aware of the improper inclusion in that list of several owners and of half the dhows, and in view of our having throughout consulted him as to details and accuracy of the list. He will certainly be extremely aggrieved if asked to do so.

"The result of the acceptance of Laronce's list of fifty dhows would be that the practical evil would, during the Sultan's lifetime, be as great in the future as in the past, and that the use of the French flag would be legalized on as great a number, if not greater, of dhows than those which have hitherto claimed to fly it. This has, in fact, been pointed out to me incidentally by His Highness."

Major Cox further remarks:—

"No. 8 on the French list is not entitled to be a protégé in Oman, as I am satisfied, from evidence produced by the Sultan, that he is at the present moment, and has been all his life, domiciled with his family at Soor."

I fully endorse these views, and trust that every consideration will be given to them. I also trust that announcement to French Government may be deferred until I can report result of further negotiations, which, subject to concurrence of His Majesty's Government, I will instruct Major Grey to undertake with a view to acceptance by French Consul of thirty dhows, or perhaps less.

Major Grey telegraphs that he has grounds for believing that M. Laronce would be satisfied with this.

[25854]

No. 18.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 507. Confidential.)

Sir,

Therapia, July 24, 1906.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 401, Confidential, of the 12th June, I have the honour to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a Memorandum which has been prepared by Mr. G. A. Lloyd, Honorary Attaché to His Majesty's Embassy, concerning the reports which have from time to time appeared in the press to the effect that the

Hedjaz Railway is the outcome of German activity in this country, and is being employed as a means of propagating German influence.

Mr. Lloyd, while showing how erroneous this impression is, explains the advantages of the railway from a strategic and Pan-Islamic point of view; it is, however, open to doubt whether the Hedjaz Railway is destined to succeed as an industrial enterprise, or whether, in view of the fact that there is practically no goods traffic on the line, and that the passenger traffic is confined to two or three months in the year, it is economically possible for it to continue to exist.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Memorandum by Mr. Lloyd respecting German Influence on the Hedjaz Railway.

FOR some time past, and especially since the late Akaba incident became prominent, there has been a noticeable tendency on the part of the press in England to adduce as an additional and new proof of the extent of German influence and activity in the Ottoman Dominions the construction of the Hedjaz Railway, and to see in this enterprise a dangerous weapon in the hands of Germany that may some day strike a blow against British Islamic influence.

I think, then, it may be desirable at this time to make a few remarks on the real nature of this enterprise, which may perhaps serve to show that, at present at all events, the railway shows no signs of being anything more than a purely Turkish enterprise, and the outcome of a natural desire on the part of the Sultan to achieve an important and twofold object—(1) religious, (2) strategical; in the first to draw closer to the seat of the Caliphate the Holy Places on whose control that Caliphate depends, and in the second to provide a safe means of transit for and to facilitate the rapid dispatch of troops to a portion of his dominions which is at present so largely out of touch with Constantinople as to render very difficult the military control which the Yemen has lately shown itself to be seriously in need of if the Sultan intends to exercise anything more than a very nominal suzerainty over South-Western Arabia.

These two objects are of such obvious importance to the welfare of and continuance of the Ottoman rule that they call for no further remark, and constitute, it will, I think, be admitted, an all-sufficing reason in themselves for the building of the railway without bringing up any question of German political ambitions in Syria and Arabia.

The Germans, who hold a far greater interest in the railways in Turkey than any other Power, might naturally be expected to entertain ambitions to the control of the Hedjaz Railway, both in pursuance of their steady and increasing interests in Anatolia and as a natural sequence to their constant attempts to depreciate the value of British Moslem influence in this part of the world. Could it not be shown that the Hedjaz Railway does not in the present, or, indeed, in the future, appear to be going to be at all an adaptable German weapon for the furtherance of these ambitions? Let us examine the case more closely. To begin with, the inception of the Hedjaz Railway was founded on no Concession, as in the case of all other railways in Turkey, which could at any future time be made the object of a commercial or political transaction in the way of transference of ownership to a new concessionnaire. The enterprise, being built by means of money raised from Mahomedans in all parts of the Turkish Empire, has no share capital, and belongs, in fact, to the Turkish people, and as such is a purely national concern. It is Moslem in its origin and in its realization, and as such, it may be remarked, is an interesting example as much of the vitality of Turkish enterprise when called upon to promote the interests of Islam as of the remarkable elasticity of Turkish finance, which, though hopelessly crippled in every European financial sense of the word, yet is able by an appeal to Islam to raise without difficulty sufficient "voluntary" contributions for such an immense undertaking. The railway, then, having no share capital, the possibility of Germany or any other Christian Power attempting to obtain a controlling interest is completely eliminated, and it seems unlikely that the Sultan would ever dare to enter into any negotiations to hand over the control to a Christian Power of a railway that has been built by Moslem contributions and leading to the Holy Places.

The question, then, of any definite German control in the future is, I think, sufficiently disposed of; but it may be urged that, apart from any definite control, the railway may become, through the influence that Germany has succeeded in obtaining at the Palace, a channel for the dissemination of German influence into the Hedjaz. It

would appear that such an opinion can only be the result of an imperfect appreciation of the real facts of the case. Such influence could only be used through indirect agents such as German engineers and employes engaged in working on the line, and could have little effect or weight with Moslems, who are willing, *faute de mieux*, to make use of the superior knowledge and engineering capacity of the foreigner, but who, once the construction of the line is completed, must only remain in subordinate positions on the administration of the line.

It is also a grave question whether, once the line approaches Medina and gets far into the Hedjaz, the German engineers now employed on the line will be allowed to continue their work. It is more probable that they will be called upon to train up and instruct Moslem engineers for the carrying on of the work in its later sections, in which case any influence that might possibly have been exercised through their agency will be cut off before the line reaches the district in which such influence might have any effect. In support of this idea I may mention that a notice appeared in the Turkish newspaper "Ikdam," in its issue of the 14th July, saying that a special branch of the "Ecole Technique" has been started for the instruction of men destined to become employes in the Hedjaz Railway, and that eighteen students have already commenced work with this object.

A considerable amount of stress appears to have been laid upon the fact that the engineer in charge of the construction is a German.

Before Herr Meissner obtained the appointment engineers of various nationalities had been engaged, and it is owing to his capacities as an engineer, more than to the accident of his nationality, that his influential position on the line must be attributed. Owing to the interest that Germany has taken in railway enterprise in Anatolia, as exemplified in the German management of the Anatolian, Bagdad, Mersina-Adana Railways, many more German than English engineers have been attracted to Turkey, and the appointment of Herr Meissner to administer the Hedjaz Railway is the natural result of this influx of German engineers and cannot be looked upon as the result of an attempt at establishing political influence in those parts.

It should, however, not be overlooked that Germany does reap one very practical and important advantage in Herr Meissner's appointment, which is undoubtedly the reason of what interest she has in the construction of the line.

By the appointment of Herr Meissner she secures certain commercial advantages over all other nations. The giving of contracts for all supplies and materials, rails, locomotives, &c., for the railway is almost entirely in his hands, and it is remarkable that, whereas before his appointment America supplied a large quantity of rails for the line, since his appointment almost all the rails and locomotives have been supplied from Germany. As far as I can ascertain, all the contracts for locomotives have more recently been given to the German firm of Messrs. Kreutz, the Belgian engines on the line having been supplied before his taking charge. Germany thus gets at any rate a preferential treatment on equal terms, a preference, it must be fairly said, perfectly compatible with his duties to the High Commission, but a preference which is of immense value to German manufacturers, especially in the supply of steel rails, where competition is very keen. The importance to Germany, then, from a commercial point of view, purely as regards the supply of materials, is undoubted, but this is an advantage that will do little to stimulate the most important form of trade, namely, a steady and permanent trade, and has thus only a passing importance. The commercial importance of the railway in future is very doubtful; cultivation extends only between Damascus and Amman, and that only on the edge of the railway, and the remainder of the route is one of absolute desert from which no trade can be expected. Of the through traffic that may be carried in the future it is scarcely possible to speak, but even in the very unlikely event of the quantity being existent, it may be quite safely asserted that the distance of carriage would completely check the trade, and it appears that the railway is destined, for a long time to come, to depend entirely upon passenger receipts, almost completely to be drawn from the carriage to and from Mecca annually of pilgrims for the Haj.

Such are the commercial prospects of the railway, and it is hard to see where lies the pecuniary bait to tempt a commercial nation like Germany. Of the political use of the line as a method of disseminating German influence in Arabia I have already spoken, and I venture to think that it is fairly clear that German influence as exercised at present by means of the railway amounts to little or nothing in a direct way, at any rate nothing that cannot be forestalled by keeping a careful watch on the developments of the line.

Apart from this, but indirectly connected with it, there are one or two points that

cannot be overlooked when estimating the importance of the Hedjaz Railway, and in them lie a certain source of danger to British influence, which, though somewhat indefinable, is none the less real and must not be omitted from mention, especially as they do not appear to have been touched upon before in direct connection with the Hedjaz Railway.

I refer to the recent activity in cable and telegraph line laying by Germany as exemplified by the Berlin-Constanza-Constantinople telegraph line. During the last few days only an arrangement has been concluded between Germany and the Turkish Post Office Administration, by which Germany lends to the said Administration 400,000 fr. to put the telegraph line from Constantinople to El Arish in good condition, and to insure the efficient working of the same. The capital and the interest on this sum is to be paid out of the receipts of the line, and the work has already been started, and completed as far as Pendik.

I am informed by the Director of the Eastern Telegraph Company here that the object of the Germans in this loan is to insure good telegraphic communication for themselves direct from Berlin to Egypt independent of British lines, and though this scheme was initiated before the development of the recent events in Egypt, it is a matter whose importance should not be lost sight of should any complication of a similar nature arise in the future. I am also informed by the same source that Germany is contemplating a telegraph line to link up Gaza and Akaba, from whence it is intended to take the line to Jeddah, with the ultimate object of completing from Jeddah a cable to Dar-es-Salaam in German East Africa.

Apart from the ultimate conclusion of the Hedjaz Railway to Mecca, it may be well to draw attention to the strategical importance from the Turkish point of view that the line will very shortly commence to have on its arrival at Medain-Saleh. The line has already reached Zat-el-Haj, which is scarcely 150 miles from Medain-Saleh, and, once arrived there, the centre and heart of the Nejd district becomes immediately in touch with the railway. Hail, the capital of the Ibn Rashid family, is separated from Medain-Saleh only by some four or five dromedary marches, and so it is that the railway will have a very important effect upon the politics of the Nejd, and it may be due to this fact that the Sultan recently decided, after the death of Ibn Rashid, to continue to support the fallen fortunes of that family against the superior forces of Ibn Saud, and it is this aspect of the Hedjaz Railway more than any direct German influence that is the most important point to be dealt on from the British point of view.

In conclusion I may venture to remark that the Pan-Islamic movement, in which Germany has shown such an interest of late, is not likely to be affected by the commercial interest that she has taken in the line between Damascus and Maan, and a little more experience of the Moslem may help her to realize that Pan-Islamism is a weapon that may be used against more than one nation, and that in any case her penetration into the Hedjaz would, more likely than not, be fraught with considerably more danger than success.

(Signed) G. A. LLOYD.

[23976]

No. 19.

Memorandum communicated to Count de Bosdari, July 31, 1906.

HIS Majesty's Government have carefully considered the Memorandum communicated by the Italian Embassy on the 7th ultimo, in which it was proposed that each Power interested in the safety of the Red Sea should be intrusted with the surveillance of that part of the coast of Arabia facing its African possessions.

It appears to His Majesty's Government that, in the circumstances now existing, the adoption of any proposal tending to divide the Red Sea into spheres of influence by the various Powers interested in those regions would be likely to raise many difficult questions, and His Majesty's Government regret, therefore, that they do not see their way to supporting the suggestions of the Italian Government.

Foreign Office, July 31, 1906.

[1669]

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[26342]

No. 20.

*M. Cambon to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 2.)**Ambassade de France, Londres,
le 31 Juillet, 1906.*

M. le Secrétaire d'État,

SELON le désir exprimé par votre Excellence, le Consul de France à Mascate a été chargé par le Gouvernement de la République de s'entendre avec son collègue Britannique au sujet de l'application de la Sentence Arbitrale du 8 Août, 1905. Des conférences ont eu lieu à ce sujet au mois de Décembre dernier entre M. Laronce et le Major Grey. A la suite de ces pourparlers, l'Agent Français a remis au Consul d'Angleterre, le 4 Mars dernier, la liste des boutriers que le Gouvernement de la République considère comme ayant le droit d'arborer le pavillon Français; le 20 Avril, il lui a communiqué également un projet de Règlement destiné à assurer l'application de la Sentence Arbitrale de La Haye. Le Major Grey a annoncé qu'il transmettait ces pièces au Gouvernement Britannique. Le Gouvernement Français considère, d'ailleurs, que ces documents avaient été rédigés dans l'esprit le plus conciliant et avec le plus sincère désir de régler, dans un esprit de bonne entente réciproque, une affaire de très minime importance. Or, non seulement les propositions formulées par M. Laronce n'ont pas été acceptées par le Gouvernement Britannique, mais, depuis de longs mois, et malgré les efforts de l'Ambassade de la République à Londres, il n'a pas été possible d'obtenir de la part du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté même l'expression d'un avis au sujet de ces documents. Une telle façon d'agir est si peu en harmonie avec les dispositions conciliantes manifestées à diverses reprises par votre Excellence que je suis obligé de penser que les difficultés soulevées et les retards qui se sont produits ne peuvent être attribués qu'à l'intervention des Représentants du Gouvernement de l'Inde, et notamment du Major Cox, Résident à Bouchir, qui s'est déjà montré précédemment peu disposé à traiter cette petite affaire dans l'esprit amical qui doit animer les Représentants des deux pays.

Je crois devoir, dans ces conditions, appeler sur cette question l'attention de votre Excellence, persuadé que, si elle veut bien l'examiner, elle reconnaîtra l'esprit de conciliation dont a fait preuve le Gouvernement de la République et la modération des propositions formulées par son Agent.

Je serais reconnaissant à votre Excellence de vouloir bien me faire connaître l'accueil que le Gouvernement Britannique leur a réservé.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) PAUL CAMBON.

[26494]

No. 21.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 3.)

Sir,

India Office, August 2, 1906.

IN continuation of my letter of the 13th ultimo, relative to the Muscat Arbitration Award, I am directed to submit, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the following observations on Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 27th June, with reference to the views expressed in Major Cox's letter of the 26th June, and in the Viceroy's telegrams of the 10th and 26th July.

2. After careful consideration of the views of Major Cox and the Government of India, and recognizing in principle the force of their criticisms, Mr. Morley is at the same time satisfied that it is expedient to accept Sir E. Grey's suggestion (1) that M. Laronce's list should be accepted without further question; and (2) that, in spite of the terms of the Award, the papers of any dhow named in the list which may pass out of its present owner's possession while he remains entitled to fly the French flag may be transferred to another dhow belonging to the same owner, provided that the total number of dhows named in the list can in no case be increased.

3. Although these concessions may not be agreeable to His Highness the Sultan, it is understood that the dhow owners mentioned in the list have no power of transferring their personal rights in respect of dhows owned either wholly or in part by themselves to any one else, whether by devolution or otherwise. I am to call attention to this understanding because the remarks of His Majesty's Consul at Muscat on the list presented to him by the French Consul indicate that the listed dhow owner

possesses only a share in some of the listed dhows, and it is presumed that the death of the listed dhow owner will extinguish the rights which his partners, if any, may have derived from him during his lifetime under his authority to fly the French flag.

4. Mr. Morley would, however, commend to Sir E. Grey's favourable consideration the suggestions of the Government of India that, when the transfer of a flag from one dhow to another belonging to the same owner is authorized, the French Consul should be required to notify the fact immediately to the Sultan, and similarly to furnish an annual list of flag-holders and their dhows. The French Government might also be asked to instruct their Consul to inform his British colleague, as a matter of courtesy, of the notifications made to the Sultan on the subject. This procedure will go far to prevent any revival of the misunderstandings which in the past have tended to disturb the situation at Muscat.

5. Article 5 of the "projet de Règlement" raises the question of jurisdiction in the case of offences committed on the high seas and in Muscat territorial waters. The question was discussed in Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 8th February, 1906, and it seems desirable that the views of His Majesty's Government, as expressed in that letter, should now be stated to the French Government.

6. It may be well, in conclusion, to advert to the case of the six dhow owners in Zanzibar, referred to in my letter of the 14th February last, who were claimed as French protégés under the Agreement of the 13th May, 1904. In view of the proposals which are made in this letter, Mr. Morley would leave it to Sir E. Grey to decide whether the decision arrived at in Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 27th February last might not now be modified, and the owners of these dhows placed in the same position as the Muscati dhow owners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[26494]

No. 22.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 13, 1906.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to state, for the information of the Secretary of State for India, that he has carefully considered your letter of the 2nd instant, together with the papers previously communicated by you on the 13th, 24th, and 26th ultimo in regard to the Muscat Arbitration Award.

Sir E. Grey fully concurs in Mr. Morley's view that, in principle, there is much force in the observations of the Government of India and Major Cox as to the doubtful nature of the French claims and the difficulty of pressing the Sultan to accept the list of dhow-owners supplied by M. Laronce. He considers, however, that when Major Cox contends, as appears from his letter of the 26th June, that, unless the French list is reduced, His Majesty's Government will practically sacrifice the results of the arbitration, he loses sight of the two principal advantages which have been secured by the Award.

These advantages are, firstly, that, with the death of the present flag-holders, no more dhows privileged to fly the French flag will remain, when the controversy will automatically cease; and, secondly, that the flag-holders, directly they land in Oman, will come under the Sultan's jurisdiction.

Sir E. Grey is therefore glad to note that Mr. Morley concurs in the suggestions put forward in the letter from this Office of the 27th June with a view of settling this long-pending controversy with the French Government.

The decisions which have been agreed upon are embodied in the Memorandum of which a draft is inclosed,* and Sir E. Grey proposes, if Mr. Morley concurs, to communicate this document to the French Ambassador.

It will be seen, from the accompanying copy of a note which has recently been received from M. Cambon,† that the French Government are manifesting some impatience at the delay in the settlement of this question.

Sir E. Grey does not consider that this complaint is in any way justified, and he will point out to M. Cambon, in reply, that, before arriving at a decision, it was necessary for His Majesty's Government to consult the Government of India, and to give full consideration to their views.

* Inclosure in No. 24.

† No. 20.

In communicating to the French Embassy the Memorandum above referred to, Sir E. Grey proposes to intimate verbally that, if the French Government are unable to accept the liberal concessions now offered to them, His Majesty's Government will be compelled to obtain further evidence regarding the dhows for which French papers are claimed with a view of subjecting the list to a searching inquiry, and he will suggest that the other points in dispute should be referred for final decision to M. Lammasch, the Umpire in the recent arbitration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GORST.

[28595]

No. 23.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 21.)

Sir,

India Office, August 20, 1906.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to acknowledge Sir E. Gorst's letter of the 13th instant in regard to the Muscat Arbitration Award.

Mr. Morley has given his careful attention to the draft Memorandum which it is proposed to communicate to the French Embassy, and subject to a verbal alteration which he would suggest, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, in the second condition attached to our proposed acceptance of the French list, he is prepared to concur in its terms.

He also concurs in Sir E. Grey's proposal to intimate orally to the French Ambassador that, if his Government are unable to accept the liberal concessions now offered to them, His Majesty's Government will be compelled to submit the French list to a searching inquiry, and will suggest that the other points in dispute should be referred for final decision to the Umpire in the recent arbitration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

[28595]

No. 24.

Sir Edward Grey to M. Geoffroy.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 22, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the note which M. Cambon was good enough to address to me on the 31st ultimo on the subject of the Arbitral Award pronounced last year at The Hague in regard to the dhows flying the French flag at Muscat.

I regret that the French Government should consider that undue delay has taken place in arriving at an agreement as to the steps to be taken for carrying out [the decision of the Tribunal].

His Majesty's Government entirely share the view of the French Government that this matter should be arranged as speedily as possible, and it has been their desire throughout to treat the subject in the most friendly spirit.

The discussions which have taken place between the French Consul at Muscat and his British colleague have, however, unfortunately shown that considerable divergence of opinion exists between these two officers, and His Majesty's Government have been obliged to carefully examine the question in consultation with the Government of India and to give full consideration to their views.

In these circumstances it was inevitable that some time should elapse before His Majesty's Government were in a position to pronounce a definite decision.

I have now the honour to inclose a Memorandum dealing with the points of difference which have arisen, and proposing a settlement which I trust the French Government will accept as a friendly and conciliatory solution of the question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Memorandum.

WITH reference to the communication made by the French Ambassador on the 22nd June last, His Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the reports from His Majesty's Consul at Muscat of his negotiations with his French colleague in regard to the application of the Muscat dhows Arbitration Award of August last.

It would appear that Major Grey and M. Laronce have agreed that the result of the Arbitration should be notified by the Sultan to his subjects by means of a Proclamation to be issued by His Highness, but that they are unable to come to an agreement as to the list of persons who are to be entitled to fly the French flag according to the terms of the Award.

The following "projet de Règlement" for the settlement of these questions was communicated by M. Laronce to Major Grey on the 20th April last:—

"Article 1^{er}. Les sujets du Sultan qui sont autorisés à l'avenir à arborer le pavillon Français sur leurs navires jouissent dans l'Oman du même traitement et des mêmes droits que tous les autres sujets de Sa Hautesse.

"Art. 2. En principe, les personnes autorisées à arborer le pavillon Français sur leurs navires sont celles dont la liste a été dressée par le Consulat de France à Mascate, et remise au Consulat d'Angleterre le 4 Mars, 1906, à moins de modifications pouvant résulter du décès de ces personnes ou du retrait par la France de l'autorisation.

"Art. 3. Les propriétaires de boutres battant pavillon Français pourront en toute liberté vendre leurs navires, ou en acheter d'autres sans que leur droit au pavillon Français puisse être contesté.

"Art. 4. Les boutriers qui ont le droit d'arborer le pavillon Français ne pourront transmettre ce droit à leurs héritiers, descendants, ou collatéraux; les boutres dont ceux-ci obtiendraient ainsi la possession arboreront le pavillon du Sultan.

"Art. 5. La juridiction du Sultan sera applicable dans l'Oman à tous les propriétaires de boutres battant pavillon Français, ainsi qu'aux capitaines et aux membres de l'équipage; toutefois, pour les crimes et les délits ou contestations, ayant eu lieu à bord en haute mer ou dans les eaux territoriales de l'Oman, et en général partout où le droit d'inviolabilité est réservé, la compétence restera au Consul de France, ou à défaut à son représentant, ou aux officiers de la Marine Nationale. Si le crime ou délit est établi, le coupable sera remis au Sultan.

"Art. 6. Les dispositions du présent Règlement, après approbation des Gouvernements Français et Anglais, seront communiquées, ainsi que le texte de la sentence, par voie d'affiches, aux sujets du Sultan."

His Majesty's Government note with satisfaction the friendly and conciliatory manner in which the two Consuls have carried on their negotiations, they are, however, unable to admit that M. Laronce's attitude and proposals are in accordance with either the spirit or the letter of the recent Award.

M. Laronce apparently claims that authorization to fly the French flag was given to each and every owner once for all—that is to say, if once it is admitted that a particular Muscati falls within one of the categories authorized under Part I of the Award, then, under Part II—

(a.) He is entitled to fly the French flag over any and every dhow which he now possesses, or may ever possess, and is not limited to the dhow or dhows specifically mentioned by name in the revised French list of the 4th March, 1906; and

(b.) That he is entitled to replace any dhow at present in his possession of which he may subsequently become dispossessed by sale or loss.

As regards (a), His Majesty's Government hold that if the authorization granted to the flagholder was originally a general one for all his dhows, then he will retain that right under the terms of the Award; but that if, on the other hand, the original authorization was granted for a dhow or dhows specifically mentioned by name, then authorization for the same dhow or dhows only can be claimed under the Award. It appears that M. Laronce, on being requested to produce a copy of the original authorization for each dhow claimed or to quote the date of first issue, has expressed his inability to comply. Nevertheless, he cannot dispute the evidence available in the recorded specimens of "titres de navigation," which warrants the presumption that the authorizations issued in the past have in all cases been made out for single dhows by name and not in a general form. If M. Laronce's claim, that the first authorization, even though only issued for a single dhow, carries with it the right to fly the French flag over

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all dhows which the owner may ever possess, were to be admitted, the number of such dhows might be indefinitely increased, and it would be impossible for the Sultan to check the process, or to know at any given time how many and what dhows are sailing under the French flag. That it was the intention of the arbitrators to limit strictly not only the number of flagholders, but also the number of dhows entitled to fly the French flag, is evident from the terms of the Award, in which reference is made, Part I, sections 1 and 3, to "le droit d'autoriser les navires . . . à arborer le pavillon Français," and Part II, section 1, "les boutres . . . autorisés, &c. . . ." Section 2, "l'autorisation ne peut être transmise, &c. . . ou à quelque autre boutre," and section 3, "Boutres autorisés à arborer," &c. . . .

In order to carry out the terms of the Award it is important that the notification which will be ultimately promulgated among the subjects of the Sultan shall contain the names not only of the French flagholders, but also of the dhows which are entitled to carry the French flag, and His Majesty's Government would not feel justified in accepting any settlement which did not provide accordingly.

As regards (b), His Majesty's Government consider that the claim to replace dhows which have been lost or sold is in entire contradiction with section 2 of Part II of the Award, which lays down that "l'autorisation d'arborer le pavillon Français ne peut être transmise ou transférée à quelque autre personne ou à quelque autre boutre ("dhow"), même si celui-ci appartenait au même propriétaire."

The list of French flagholders communicated by M. Laronce on the 4th March, 1906, contains the names of twenty dhow-owners and of forty-five dhows. His Majesty's Consul reports that, as the result of careful inquiry, he has evidence to prove that certain of the dhow-owners are not entitled to the authorization, and that many of the dhows are not the property of the persons against whose names they have been entered. He considers that the Sultan would be legitimately aggrieved if he were called upon to recognize claims of the very doubtful character of which he is fully aware, and that the list should properly be reduced to fourteen owners and eighteen dhows. This serious divergence of opinion with his French colleague would appear to call for a searching investigation into the evidence for and against the claims advanced.

Nevertheless, His Majesty's Government, animated by feelings of sincere good-will towards the French Government, desire to settle this question rather in a spirit of friendly concession than in accordance with a strict interpretation of the terms of the Award. Accordingly they are prepared to accept the list of flagholders and dhows communicated by M. Laronce on the 4th March last, subject to the following conditions:—

1. That the French Government are satisfied as to *bona fide* nature of the claims advanced in regard to which M. Laronce might be invited to consult the evidence collected by his British colleague with a view to further revision.
2. That it is clearly understood that the dhow-owners mentioned in the list have no power of transferring their right, which is personal to themselves, to fly the French flag on dhows owned either wholly or in part by themselves to any one else whether by devolution or otherwise, and that the death of any owner on the list will extinguish the rights which his partners, if any, may have derived from him during his lifetime under his authority to fly the French flag.
3. That the list of dhow-owners and dhows, when finally settled should, under no circumstances, be modified.

But as a further concession His Majesty's Government are ready to admit that, in spite of the terms of the Award, the papers of any dhow named in the list which may pass out of its present owner's possession while he remains entitled to fly the French flag may be transferred to another dhow belonging to the same owner, provided that the total number of dhows named in the list can in no case be increased. They consider that when the transfer of a flag from one dhow to another is authorized, their French Consul at Muscat should be required to notify the fact immediately to the Sultan, and similarly to furnish to His Highness an annual list of flagholders and their dhows.

They would further suggest, for the favourable consideration of the French Government, that M. Laronce should be instructed to inform his British colleague, as a matter of courtesy, of the notifications made to the Sultan on the subject.

There remains a further question in regard to the six dhow-owners in Zanzibar whom M. Laronce claims as French protégés under the Agreement of the 13th May, 1904.

It appears, according to the information in possession of His Majesty's Government, that four of these men are in reality subjects of the Sultan of Muscat, and therefore not entitled to French protection under the terms of the Award.

His Majesty's Government are, however, not disposed to press for any further investigation in regard to the validity of this claim, and they are willing to admit that the Arabs in question may be placed in the same position as the other dhow-owners on the French Consul's list.

It is hoped that the French Government will appreciate the liberal nature of the concessions now proposed.

As regards the point raised in Article 4 of M. Laronce's "projet de Règlement," relative to the French claim to jurisdiction in Muscat over an Omani accused of having committed a crime on the high seas while sailing in a dhow flying the French flag, His Majesty's Government are of opinion that if the Omani in question leaves the ship and proceeds on shore he comes at once under the jurisdiction of the Sultan and is not justiciable by the French Consul. On the other hand, the Sultan has no valid ground of complaint if, without being landed, the man is transhipped for trial at Obokh, or some other place within French territory; nor would it be reasonable for His Highness to object if the man were merely landed so as to enable the French Consul to make arrangements for his being sent for trial before a Court in French territory.

It is suggested that clauses should be added to the proposed Notification to the effect that any infringement by any of the subjects of the Sultan of the arrangement now arrived at would be severely punished, and further, that any flag-holders who may desire to surrender their French papers will be permitted to do so.

His Majesty's Government sincerely hope that, in view of the considerable concessions to which they are prepared to consent, an arrangement on the above lines will prove acceptable to the French Government. Should it, however, be found impossible to arrive at an understanding in the matter, they must reserve their full right to continue the discussion in the light of a strict interpretation of the Arbitration Award.

Foreign Office, August 22, 1906.

[28595]

No. 25.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 455.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, August 22, 1906.

I transmit herewith to your Excellency a copy of a note with its inclosure,* on the subject of the Muscat Arbitration case, which was handed to-day to the French Minister when he called at this Office.

It was at the same time intimated to M. Geoffray that if the French Government were unable to accept His Majesty's Government's very liberal proposals, the only other course which suggested itself would be to instruct the Consuls of the two Powers to collect and send home all the evidence they were able to obtain regarding the dhows for which French papers are claimed and to submit the list to a searching scrutiny. In that case the other points in dispute might be referred to arbitration.

M. Geoffray promised to inform his Government of my views.

I am, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD GREY.

[28729]

No. 26.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 23.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 22nd August, relative to the Muscat Arbitration Award.

India Office, August 22, 1906.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

August 22, 1906.

MUSCAT Award. Your telegram dated the 13th instant. Cox telegraphed as follows on the 19th instant:—

"On presumption that at present stage it would be neither becoming nor efficacious to make further representation, and that decision now communicated is final, I would recommend that, before the news reaches Sultan of Muscat from other sources, we should ourselves frankly communicate to him decision of His Majesty's Government. The inaccuracy of the list which it is proposed to accept will, directly it is published, be apparent to Sultan's subjects, and His Highness himself considers it factitious; but if we could take His Highness into our confidence and inform him of the reasons of State which have prompted His Majesty's Government to waive investigation of title and accept list on his behalf, I feel sure that the intimation would be more palatable to the Sultan, and his objections might perhaps be forestalled."

As it seems desirable that communication to Sultan should be made first by us, and in terms which His Majesty's Government approve, we request that we may be favoured by His Majesty's Government with a brief statement, for communication to His Highness, of the reasons which have rendered necessary the course adopted. Meanwhile Cox is being informed that orders are final.

[30814]

No. 27.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 11.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 29th ultimo, relative to the Muscat Arbitration Award.

India Office, September 10, 1906.

Inclosure in No. 27.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P.

India Office, August 29, 1906.

MUSCAT Award. Your telegram dated the 22nd August last.

On the 23rd August note was presented to French Embassy, of which following is substance. Objections which His Majesty's Government entertain to Laronce's proposals are recited, and the fact that, according to evidence which Grey has collected, list should properly be reduced to eighteen dhows and fourteen owners is pointed out. His Majesty's Government are, nevertheless, in a spirit of friendly concession, ready to accept Laronce's list on the following conditions:—

1. That *bond fide* nature of claims is established to satisfaction of French Government; as to this point, with a view to further revision, Laronce might be invited to consult Grey's evidence.

2. That any rights derived by partners from flag-holder during his lifetime are extinguished by his death.

3. That in no circumstances shall the list be modified when once it has been settled.

Further concessions, referred to in my telegram dated the 5th ultimo, are also included in note.

Until attitude of French Government in regard to revision is ascertained, communication to Sultan should, in these circumstances, be deferred.